www.navynews.co.uk

PLAIN ENGLISH AWARD WINNER

NAVY NEWS

Off-sale date: September 1, 2007

AUGUST 2007 **£1.40**

OCEAN BEAT
DRUG-BUSTING IN THE CARIBBEAN

MASSIF ATTACK
IN THE MOUNTAINS WITH 847 NAS

CORPS BUSINESS
US MARINES JOIN HMS ILLUSTRIOUS

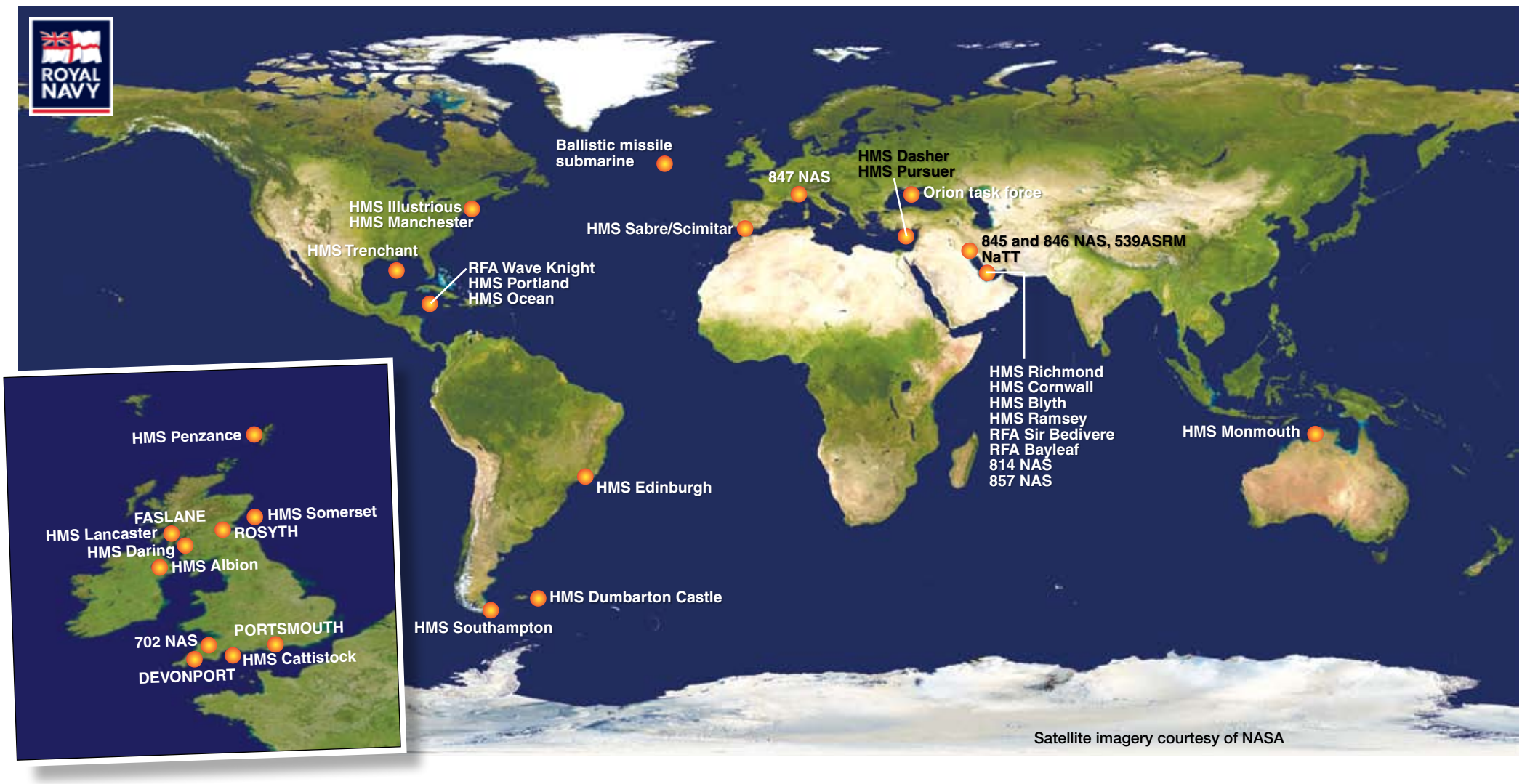
DAY OF DARING

BILLED as the world's most advanced warship, HMS Daring – the first of the Navy's 21st-Century destroyers – prepares to pass under the Erskine Bridge spanning the Clyde on her maiden voyage.

The air defence warship is undergoing extensive sea trials off Scotland's west coast on the first of a series tests which pave the way for front-line duties in two years' time. *See page 3 for more details.*

Picture: PO(Phot) Tam McDonald, FRPU Clyde

GLOBAL REACH



Fleet Focus

CURRENT operations by the men and women of the Senior Service fall into two distinct 'theatres': the Americas and the Gulf.

We'll begin with the former. **HMS Illustrious** and her escort **HMS Manchester** are patrolling the Eastern Seaboard of the USA for exercises with the US Navy/Marine Corps – exercises which have meant the arrival of some strange birds aboard the carrier (*see page 7*).

Also off the USA is frigate **HMS Portland**, meeting French, American and Russian warships for war games (*turn to page 10*) before heading to the Caribbean.

There she took over from helicopter assault ship **HMS Ocean**, whose patrol paid off with another drugs bust (*see pages 4 and 24-27*).

Newly-commissioned patrol ship **HMS Clyde** (*see page 6*) is about to depart for the Falklands, somewhere destroyer **HMS Edinburgh** has now left behind. She's most recently been in Rio as she makes her way home at the end of a nine-month deployment (see *page 6*).

Edinburgh's shoes in the South Atlantic have been ably filled by her sister **HMS Southampton**, which sailed down the Pacific coast of South America before negotiating the Patagonian Canals (*see page 5*).

Half-way around the world in the Arabian Gulf, **HMS Cornwall** has just handed over duties to **HMS Richmond** (*see opposite*), while the work of the RN-led **Naval Transition Team** (NaTT) has ensured Iraqi Navy warships are now patrolling their waters (*see page 10*).

And we should not overlook the continuing contribution made by the RN and RM to operations in **Afghanistan** (*see pages 14-15*).

HMS Monmouth's Far East deployment has turned into a world tour; most recently she could be found in the northern Australian city of Darwin (*see page 14*).

In the skies, the Lynx of **702 NAS** made a brief detour to Dartmoor to hone fliers' skills on operating over land (*see page 13*), while fellow Lynx men of **847 NAS** headed to southern France for altitude/mountain warfare training (*see page 22*).

Both mini-deployments were conducted largely away from the public gaze. Not so **Yeovilton Air Day** which championed the best of naval aviation (and foreign aviators/RAF) in front of 30,000 people (*see page 16*).

HMS Cattistock has concluded her 25th birthday celebrations (*see page 4*), while sister ship **HMS Ledbury** was granted the freedom of her namesake market town (*see page 21*).

In home waters, **HMS Daring** has finally put to sea to begin trials (*see opposite*) while off Scotland's east coast, **HMS Somerset** has also been conducting trials, tracking aircraft in the form of the RAF's Typhoon (*see page 6*).

And talking of cutting-edge technology, the next-generation cruise missile, Tomahawk Block IV, has been successfully fired from **HMS Trenchant** at a target on a range in Florida (*see right*).

We can now shout about what **HMS Lancaster** has been up to after she was silently looking for a submarine (*see page 4*).

And talking of silence... a thank-you to the unflinching men of the **Silent Service** whose duty upholding Britain's ultimate deterrent has reached a milestone (*see opposite*).



More (precise) bangs for your buck

THE first of the Navy's next-generation cruise missiles successfully smashed into a test target during trials.

From the tubes of hunter-killer submarine HMS Trenchant, (*above*) the new 'smart' version of Tomahawk hurtled over the Gulf of Mexico at heights up to 10,000ft and speeds of up to 500mph for 60 minutes before crashing down on its objective hundreds of miles away at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida with pinpoint accuracy (*below*).

Tomahawk IV is the latest variant of the missile which has been in service with the American military since the late 1970s and with the Silent Service for the past decade.

Previous Tomahawks have been fired by S and T boats against enemy targets in Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq.

The Mark IV has a longer range than its predecessors (in excess of 1,000 miles), can be directed to a fresh target in mid-flight, and can also beam back images of the battlefield to its mother submarine.

The RN ordered 64 of the improved missiles from the US Government four years ago in a £70m deal (each Tomahawk missile itself costs roughly £650,000).

Tomahawk IV will be used by Trafalgar-class and new Astute-class submarines and will become operational in May next year.

Trenchant conducted the test firing at the end of trials for her weaponry and sonar at the AUTEC range in the Bahamas.

The Tongue of the Ocean, a deep tongue-shaped oceanic trench off Andros Island, is littered with sensors which pick up reams of data from submarines, torpedoes, sonar buoys, ships and anything else moving through the water.

Trenchant's time at AUTEC allowed software experts to test the latest programmes which drive the boat's potent sonar suite.

And as it's in the Bahamas, AUTEC does offer some excellent downtime – for some of Trenchant's crew the first R&R since the Devonport boat sailed for Operational Sea Training in February – with its groves and deep water diving and swimming holes.



Chatham goes Dutch

WHAT do you do if the Dutch request British presence at celebrations of their greatest admiral who ransacked Chatham?

Why, you send HMS Chatham naturally.

The Devonport frigate represented the Senior Service in Vlissingen, birthplace of Admiral de Ruyter, scourge of the RN in the 17th Century.

Among other achievements the Dutchman led a force up the Thames, destroyed 16 ships of the line, cut the flagship HMS Royal Charles from her mooring at Greenwich, and sacked Chatham.

A few score years later, the Dutch are among Britain's strongest allies, and ships from many European navies, plus the US, gathered off Vlissingen for a review and sail past.

"The Dutch Navy took part in our celebrations of Trafalgar and it's the least Chatham can do to repay the compliment," said Cdr Martin Connell, the frigate's CO.

"There is a certain irony in Chatham being sent – but look at it another way: there couldn't be a more appropriate ship to send to celebrate the close relationship which now exists between our two great nations."

Review over, the ship spent two days alongside for Navy Days, where she hosted more than 6,000 visitors.

She then sailed with Belgian frigate Westdiep and towed a target for Belgian F16s to attack with bombs and cannon, before the Navy Days theme continued, this time in Den Helder.

Again the Dutch public couldn't get enough of the British warship: 10,000 visitors filed around Chatham during the three-day maritime festival.

Before heading to the Netherlands, the frigate found a use for veteran assault ships HMS Fearless and Intrepid.

The two decommissioned Falklands veterans are laid up in Portsmouth Harbour awaiting being broken up (or 'recycled retirement as it's now known) in a British yard.

But the sisters proved rather useful to HMS Chatham when she needed to stock up on ammo.

Not a problem... except that this was July. In Blighty. Blowing a hooley. Blowing a hooley so much, in fact, that ammunitioning was ruled out.

Ruled out, that is, until Naval Base staff decided to tie Chatham to the disused ships, sheltering the frigate from the inclement summer weather.

As the wind speed increased, crates of ammo were hurriedly shifted. The final missile transport box was craned off as the heavens opened, heralding a week of rotten weather in the Solent.

"It's great that Fearless and Intrepid have been hugely handy for Chatham," explained Weapon Engineer Officer Lt Cdr Chris Smith.

"This was pretty much our last option – had the Portsmouth team not succeeded we would have been looking to recall people over summer leave or shorten our much-needed engineering period."

Richmond on station

FRIGATE HMS Richmond has traded places with HMS Cornwall as the RN's 'Gulf guardian', protecting the oil platforms which account for 80 per cent of Iraq's wealth.

Beyond safeguarding the two structures, the Portsmouth-based warship will work hand-in-hand with the Iraqi Navy to help them defend the terminals – a task they will eventually perform on their own.

Cornwall returns to Devonport later this month.

Go forth on a Daring venture

YOUR eyes do not deceive you. This is not some computer wizardry. This really is HMS Daring making her maiden voyage.

Nearly 15 years after being first mooted, eight years since Britain decided to pull out of the Anglo-Italian-UK Project Horizon, four years after being laid down, 17 months on from her launch, the first of the Navy's next-generation destroyers slipped her moorings at Scotstoun and headed down Glasgow's great artery under her own power for the first time, aided by the tug Bruiser.

A mixed crew of Daring's ship's company and engineers and shipwrights from BAE Systems – who have shared construction of the Type 45 warship with the VT Group in Portsmouth – took the destroyer down the Clyde for sea trials off Scotland's west coast.

Those trials involve testing Daring's innovative all-electric propulsion system, and her manoeuvring and navigational systems to ensure the ship is seaworthy and safe to sail on the high seas.

"This is a great moment for everybody who has been involved in the Type 45 Destroyer project since its inception – the first time Daring has moved and steered under her own power," said Cdr David Shutts, Daring's Marine Engineer Officer and Senior Naval Officer.

"I and the rest of the ship's company – and the many contractors' staff on board – had been looking forward to this event for a long time. It's not every day you take a First-of-Class warship to sea."

Following that, her main 4.5in gun will fire at the range in Benbecula – not to test the gun itself, which is a proven weapon, but to measure the loads and stresses it places on Daring's hull.

This is the beginning of a very long road for Daring; she will not see her future home base of Portsmouth before the end of next year and will not officially be in service until 2009.

There is also the small matter of her missile system to test.

As Daring sailed, so too trials barge Longbow, leaving Pompey for the Mediterranean to marry the Sampson radar (hidden inside the 'Sputnik' ball on a Type 45's main mast) with the Aster missile.

Picture: PO(Phot) Tam McDonald, FRPU Clyde



... WHAT A HUGE ACHIEVEMENT BY THE WHOLE DETERRENT FORCE OVER SOME 38 YEARS...

Acts of Vengeance

ON FRIDAY June 14 1968, HMS Resolution slipped away from her berth at Faslane.

There were no wives to wave farewell, no Royal Marines Band to wish the submarine godspeed, no reporters or photographers to mark the moment.

Thus began the first nuclear deterrent patrol by the Royal Navy.

With the same understatement – and resolve of purpose – HMS Vengeance returned to UK waters after completing the 300th deterrent patrol.

Upholding the right of the line has devoured some 50 million 'man hours' on patrols.

The round-the-clock presence actually began in April 1969, ten months after Resolution's inaugural patrol.

Since then there has not been a single second when a strategic missile submarine has not been safeguarding the British people.

Most of the crew of Vengeance, the fourth and final of the Vanguard-class boats which currently carry Britain's nuclear arsenal, were not born when Resolution began that first patrol with Polaris missiles aboard – forerunners of today's Tridents.

The boats, the technology, the uniforms, the hairstyles have all changed, but "the awesome responsibility" as then Defence Secretary Denis Healey called it in 1968 has remained the same and been borne with the same resilience.

Mr Healey's latest successor, Des Browne, was waiting for Vengeance off the Isle of Arran as she returned from that 300th patrol, accompanied by First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Jonathon Band, and the head of the Silent Service, Rear Admiral David Cooke.

Once safely aboard, the VIPs were given a thorough tour of the 16,000-tonne leviathan by Commanding Officer of Vengeance's starboard crew Cdr Mark Lister, while his boat slipped beneath the waves.

Both Mr Browne and Admiral Band were quick to praise the crews of the ballistic missile boats, whose deeds are certainly unseen and invariably unsung.

"What a huge achievement by the whole deterrent force over some 38 years," Admiral Band told Cdr Lister.

"After a perfectly-executed patrol, your people can be rightly proud of their achievements across the board."

Mr Browne added: "The completion of 300 strategic deterrent patrols highlights the major contribution the Submarine Service makes to the peace and security of the United Kingdom."

The Resolution-class handed the torch to their successors in the mid-90s. Since 1996, patrols have been performed exclusively by Vanguard-class boats (*Vanguard herself is pictured below returning from a patrol earlier this year*).

Picture: PO(Phot) Tam McDonald, FRPU Clyde



GLOBAL REACH

Lancaster's silent knights

TWAS the night before Midsummer, and all through the ship, not a creature was stirring, not even the chefs in the galley with their ghettoblaster…

With apologies to Clement Clarke Moore, but the quietest people in the RN this past month have been the men and women of the good ship Lancaster.

Why? Because they've been on a four-day hunt for a submarine in the waters around Faslane.

Exercise Cable Car (which has nothing to do with aerial railways, rather it's a codename picked at random) challenges an anti-submarine frigate – which is exactly what the Red Rose ship is – to hunt down a boat without it finding the warship.

And that means silence throughout the ship. Not merely turning off the chefs', sorry logisticians(catering services(preparation)), stereo but preventing any noise escaping Lancaster's hull and travelling through the waves, so only essential kit was left running while the ops room team searched for that underwater prey.

"Instead of our normal 'steaming bats', slippers are worn – leading to an impressive array of footwear being displayed by the ship's company," said officer of the watch Lt Laura Peacock.

"The silence does have its plus-side. If you're not on watch you must go to bed so as not to make any unnecessary noise."

The silence paid off as Lancaster found and tracked her prey – which we can't name for operational reasons.

And operational reasons are why the Red Rose warship is holder of the TACDEV trophy, awarded by the Maritime Wartime Centre in HMS Collingwood to the ship or unit which suggests the best ideas for improving the front-line punch of the RN.

Lancaster's work with her Merlin helicopter during a drug-busting deployment in the Caribbean provided many useful ideas for the MWC team and earned the ship the 2006 trophy.

The Portsmouth-based frigate arrived in Faslane fresh from a visit to Lancashire's county town where her sailors paraded through the streets and were treated to a reception with traditional hot pot.



Gannet handle a load of bull

DID you hear the one about the randy bull and the helicopter crew?

No, we're not about to launch into a blue joke but one of the more unusual (and amusing) rescues by the fliers of HMS Gannet.

The overly-amorous bull (*pictured above*) was chasing his intended conquest around the fields of Tom-na-Dhubh farm in Argyll and Bute when he slipped, fell into a ditch and injured his leg (*Typical male – Ed*).

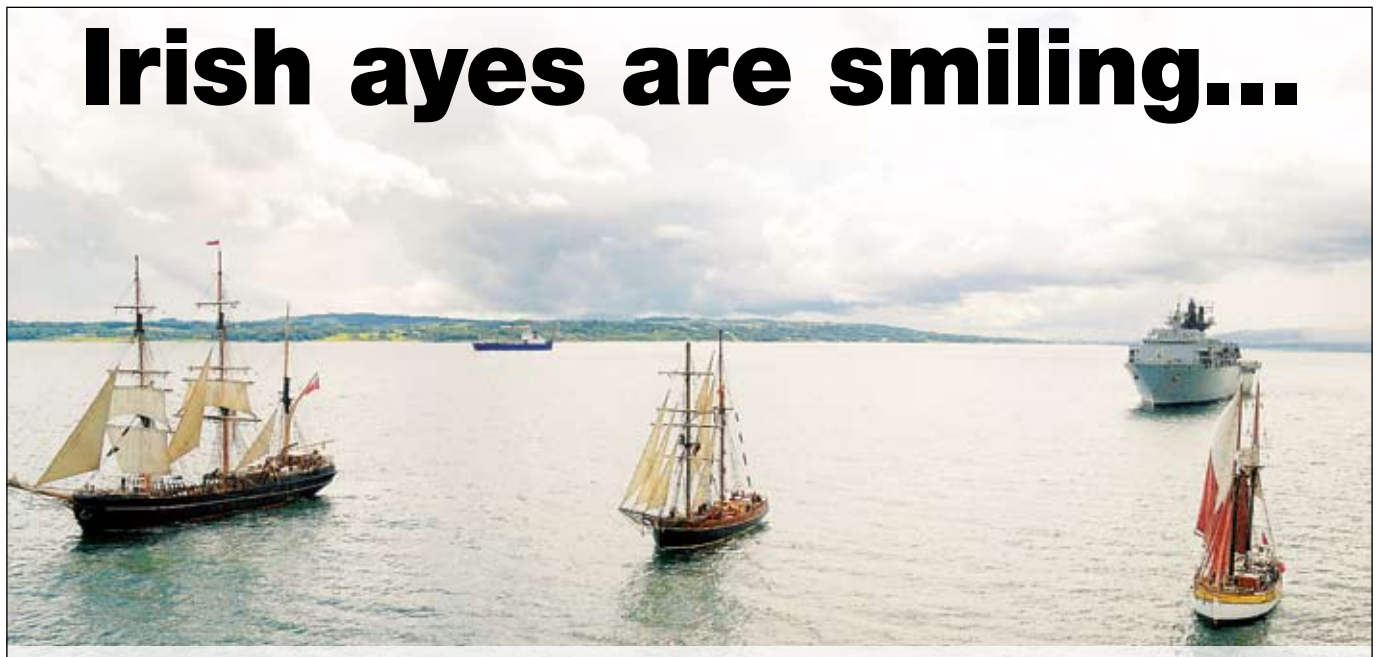
Unable to shift the wounded Casanova, the farmer called upon the services of Gannet's SAR team for what proved to be a less than orthodox rescue.

First the creature had to be dug out of the mud – not easy as he weighed about a tonne – before a net could be secured around him.

With the net in place, the animal was rather unceremoniously hauled through the air slung 100ft below a Sea King Mk5 until he was gently set down at the farm about a mile away, where a vet was waiting to treat him.

■ Letters, page 28

Irish ayes are smiling...



FRESH from her exertions invading Baltic islands on exercises with NATO, the pace of life slackened for amphibious assault ship HMS Albion as she entered Belfast Lough for the city's maritime festival.

This was the first visit to Northern Ireland by a capital ship in 35 years and it was perhaps fitting that Albion should perform that duty; her predecessor HMS Fearless was built at the Harland and Wolff yard whose cranes dominate the Belfast skyline.

Albion shepherded the tall ships Kaskelot, Zebu and Ruth up the lough (*pictured above*); all four vessels attended the two-day maritime celebration alongside sailing ships, lifeboats, and the SS Nomadic, the transfer vessel which took passengers from Cherbourg to join the Titanic on her fateful maiden voyage 90 years ago.

Picture: LA(Phot) Dan Hooper, HMS Albion

Stealth fighters in the war on drugs

BRITAIN'S biggest warship HMS Ocean bagged her second multi-million-pound haul of drugs on her Caribbean deployment after a tense night-time operation involving her helicopters and Royal Marines.

Sea Kings of 854 Naval Air Squadron tracked a light aircraft over the Caribbean as it headed for a mid-ocean rendezvous with a boat intended to ferry the bales of cocaine and heroin – with an estimated street value of £25m – ashore.

As the 'bagger' Sea Kings with their hi-tech Airborne Surveillance and Control kit monitored the aircraft's progress as night began to fall over the Caribbean, Ocean scrambled a Merlin of 700M NAS to fly to the suspected drop-off point.

The Devonport-based warship also sent two landing craft, packed with commandos of 9 Assault Squadron Royal Marines and officers from the US Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment attached to Ocean for counter-drugs work, crashing through the sea bound for the drop zone.

The Merlin quickly picked up a small vessel sending a beam of light into the night sky and waited while the light aircraft dropped its cargo into the water.

The aircrew waited as three men in the craft hauled the bundles of drugs in – unaware they were being spied on.

With the bales aboard, the drug runners made for a Caribbean island – until they were caught in the full glare of the Merlin's searchlights as the helicopter revealed its presence.

That prompted the suspected traffickers to hurriedly ditch their cargo back into the Caribbean.

The Merlin released sonobuoys – normally used in the helicopters anti-submarine warfare role – to mark the drop site, then scoured the sea in the dark for the abandoned drugs.

The helicopter lifted six bales from the water then headed back to Ocean, while local coastguards plucked a further four bales out of the sea.

After safely depositing the haul of drugs in one of the helicopter assault ship's armouries, the Merlin returned to the drop zone and continued to search the waters for more bales, this time aided by the Royal Marines whose landing craft had arrived at the site.

The subsequent search, which continued as dawn shed light on the Caribbean, brought five more bales of drugs.

By the end of the operation, Ocean was safeguarding a suspected narcotics haul of 331kg (730lbs) of cocaine and 18kg (39lbs) of heroin – an extremely rare product to find being smuggled from South America.

The cocaine has a street value of $44m and the smaller, but more valuable, heroin would have been sold for over $7m – roughly £25m in total.

It was the second bust of Ocean's four-month deployment to the region; in May an almost identical operation snared cocained valued at £28m.

■ Ocean beat, pages 24-27



● *(Right) The haul of heroin and cocaine is carried to Ocean's armoury by regulators*

Picture: LA(Phot) Ray Jones, HMS Ocean

'Above and beyond the call of duty'

FELLOW aircrew have praised the bravery of Search and Rescue diver/winchman who risked his life to save a woman trapped in a Cornish cave.

PO Julian 'Bungy' Williams released himself from the cable attaching him to the Sea King of 771 NAS so he could search the cave near Mawgan Porth, where swimmer Renee Potgieter was stuck – and suffering from hypothermia.

He scoured the cave and found the 22-year-old despite the midnight gloom, picked her up, carried her to the cave entrance.

There the senior rating could only signal to the Sea King with his torch – the sea water had ruined his radio.

The drama began some 12 hours earlier when Ms Potgieter and RNLI lifeguard Shane Davis went exploring the coastline and became stuck in the cave when Ms Potgieter got into difficulties in the water.

Around 100 people, three lifeboats, plus the helicopter from Culdrose, scoured the coastline for the missing couple but it was only when Mr Davis managed to swim out of the cave and reach a rescue boat that the location of his stranded fellow swimmer was revealed.

The 771 team – aircraft commander Lt Cdr Matt Shrimpton, pilot Capt Damian May RM, observer Lt Tim Barker, PO Williams and RAF medic Sgt Mark White – realised that a boat rescue was impossible given the fierce seas.

The solution was to winch the aircrewman into the cave to save the stranded swimmer.

Showers, gusts and rocks all conspired against the rescue attempt.

The Sea King had to hover 200ft above the cave entrance, very close to the overhanging cliff face.

"The rescue tested the whole team," said Lt Barker. "We had to get as near to the cave as possible, but turbulent wind and an overhang made the mouth of the cave itself impossible.

"This meant we had to swing Julian into the rock. He was very much on his own in the darkness and in choosing to detach, he acted above and beyond the call of duty."

Once aboard the Sea King, Ms Potgieter was treated initially by Sgt White before she was flown to the Royal Cornwall Hospital for urgent medical attention.

Admiral takes on 'task of national importance'

FORMER First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Alan West is heading the nation's war on extremists after being named Britain's security and counter-terrorism 'tsar'.

The admiral, who retired as Britain's first sailor at the beginning of last year, has warned that the nation faces a ten to 15-year struggle against fundamentalists – a struggle which may demand some 'un-British' methods, such as 'snitching' on neighbours for the public good.

"I was honoured and not a little surprised when the Prime Minister asked me to become the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Security and Counter Terrorism," the admiral told *Navy News*.

"It was a reflection of the esteem in which the Navy is held that one of its number should be selected for what the Prime Minister considers a task of national importance.

"I have also been touched by the flood of letters from my old colleagues in the Royal Navy both serving and retired."

The admiral has taken the new title Admiral the Lord West of Spithead... and will continue to read *Navy News* each month.

Cattistock parties on

A QUARTER century of fine service under the White Ensign has been celebrated by the good folk of HMS Cattistock.

The minehunter marked the milestone with a visit to the village for which she is named.

Of course, the ship cannot herself sail to deepest Dorset, so the Hunt-class warship tied up in Poole and invited Cattistock (near Dorchester) to come to her for a weekend of celebrations.

Upon arriving in Poole Harbour, the ship found herself the centre of attention as she was invited to start a race between local fishing vessels…

… which seemed more interested in a water fight than a race, as the various trawlers decided to spray anyone who came close, including Cattistock. The RN sailors put an end to such shenanigans by turning the fire hoses on the madcap fishermen.

The race proved to be no less chaotic; timekeepers and judges lost track of the racers resulting in no clear winners or losers.

One race was decisive, however. While the fishing folk raced around the harbour, AB(MW) 'Pinkie' Perkins challenged allcomers to beat him over 500 metres on the indoor racing row (all failed; his closest rival was ten seconds behind him).

Indoor rowing over, outdoor rowing took its place as Pinkie climbed into a boat with three shipmates for a race in the harbour; the Cattistockers lost out in the end to a technically inferior but physically larger team.

Suitably dried off, the sailors prepared for the big birthday event, a cocktail party for affiliates and friends, including 30 Cattistock villagers (getting on for one tenth of its residents).

The following day, Sea Scouts and Sea Cadets from Lilliput SCC were guests of honour, treated to a comprehensive tour of the ship courtesy of navigator Lt Hugh Harris.

It was a tour 2,000 members of the public duly enjoyed too when they wandered aboard for 'ship open to visitors'.

And then with the weekend over it was back to business. Fleet navigators clambered aboard for the return trip to Portsmouth to assess the bridge team's adeptness at using the WECDIS electronic charting system.

That the bridge team used very well, for after two days of manoeuvres and exercises, the Fleet navigators were happy for Cattistock to banish paper charts to the history books.

Take the weather with you...



● *Not the Solent in July, but the South Pacific... HMS Southampton ploughs through heavy seas bound for Patagonia on the latest phase of her Pacific/South Atlantic deployment*

Picture: LA(Phot) Chris Wenham, FRPU Whale Island

IN 1982 it took barely a month for the Corporate task force to reach the Falklands.

A quarter of a century later it's taken HMS Southampton nearly three months to arrive off the South Atlantic islands, but then she's fostering peace not waging war.

And proof of just how far Britain and Argentina have come since the dark days of the spring of 1982 came off the Chilean coast as Southampton worked side-by-side with the frigate ARA Robinson during a fortnight of exercises.

We last caught up with The Saint in the Chilean port of Mejillones as she edged her way down South America's Pacific coast.

And it was in Mejillones that the naval forces mustered for Exercise Teamwork South, run every two years by Chile's Navy.

The first week of the exercise, which is remarkably similar to the Neptune Warrior war games run by the RN in Scottish waters, saw the French, American, Argentine, Chilean and British sailors bond on the sports fields (although the 'field' for the tug-of-war contest bore a remarkable resemblance to a naval base quayside...)

Three days of gunnery, anti-submarine and flying training off Mejillones ended when the Teamwork South force entered Iquique (pronounced *e-key-kay*, if you were wondering), paying marks of the respects to the dead of the Chilean warship Esmerelda, lost in the Battle of Iquique in 1879.

Upon departing the port, the warships split into two groups, friend and foe. Southampton teamed up with Robinson for three days as the duo conducted boarding operations and hunted the Chilean submarine Carrera.

The exercise ended with a night-time battle reminiscent of Thursday wars off Plymouth, with the friends trying to force a merchantman through a blockade... and the foes trying to stop them.

From Iquique, Southampton continued south to the historic Chilean port of Valparaiso, the last port of call in the Pacific for the Type 42 destroyer before she entered the Atlantic.

In the heart of Valparaiso stands a towering monument to Capitan Arturo Prat, Chile's national hero who died valiantly in the Battle of Iquique. And it was at the foot of this imposing memorial that Southampton's CO Cdr Richard Morris laid a wreath in Prat's honour, accompanied by a platoon of officers and ratings from the destroyer.

Other members of the ship's company took advantage of the visit to Valparaiso to head into the hills on horseback, or travelled the relatively short distance to the capital Santiago.

Whilst Valparaiso's setting is impressive (as is the historic port itself), its beauty pales in comparison with the canals of Patagonia.

Rather than round Cape Horn, Southampton chose to negotiate 600 miles of waterway which link the Pacific and Atlantic.

For much of the passage, sadly, the mountains were obscured by fog and snow storms (perhaps apt given the rotten summer back here in Blighty), but the weather abated sufficiently for the sailors to spy the cross atop Cape Froward which marks the southernmost point on the Americas mainland.

After a 36-hour stop in Punta Arenas, Chile's most southerly city, Southampton began to make her way across the South Atlantic for the Falklands to relieve HMS Edinburgh.

Ledbury will cause double trouble

VETERAN minehunter HMS Ledbury has been earmarked to test new mine detection kit which will double her fighting capacity.

The Navy is investing £5m in what will effectively be a souped-up Rigid Inflatable Boat crammed with electronic/acoustic wizardry to sweep for mines.

Controlled by the mother ship, the boat will roam into a suspected minefield and send out acoustic and magnetic signatures to trick mines into thinking that a large vessel, not a RIB, is above them.

The new kit, to be built by Atlas-QED in Newport, Wales, is intended to replace the existing Combined Influence System (CIS) which is deployed by Hunt-class warships.

CIS is expensive and it's also tricky to use; it takes a long time to deploy the device in a towed loop – and once in the water, it restricts the movements of the mother ship.

"The new system will effectively take the man out of the minefield," explained Colin Sainsbury, heading mine warfare technological development at Defence Equipment and Support, which provides new kit for the forces.

"It will allow the ship to do hunting and sweeping at the same time, effectively doubling the ship's capability."

Although Ledbury is set to trial the device in early 2009, and the aim is for all eight Hunts to receive two 'RIB sweepers' in due course, the new equipment is designed so it can be used from any parent ship, or even a shore base.

⚓ Ledbury's civic honour, page 13

RESOLVEUK



Afraid to open your mail or answer the phone?
Robbing Peter to pay Paul? Refused a loan? Facing Bankruptcy?

We will help you to resolve your debts.

Resolve UK are specialist debt advisors to all military personnel and their families.

IT MAY BE POSSIBLE TO GET UP TO 75% OF YOUR DEBT WRITTEN OFF.

Example: Mr Bennett was struggling to pay £800 per month on £27k of debt. After negotiations we were able to reduce this to £250 and he will be debt free within 60 months.

FOR A FREE CONSULTATION IN STRICTEST CONFIDENCE, CALL US TODAY.

0173 245 1133
or: 0800 652 5113

LINES OPEN
8AM-8PM
7 DAYS A WEEK

www.resolveuk.com email: info@resolveuk.com

This is not an offer for a loan



● *Clearance diver AB(D) Chris Hayes prepares for a mission on HMS Hurworth off Turkey*

Picture: LA(Phot) Kaz Williams, FRPU Whale Island

Somerset's boom from Typhoon

THE roar of typhoons swirling around HMS Somerset could mean only one thing: the frigate was being treated to an air display from Britain's top jet.

Fighters were needed by the Devonport warship as she conducted the latest stage of her work-up following a lengthy multi-million-pound refit in Rosyth.

And the RAF duly obliged by dispatching two F2 Typhoons from 29(R) Squadron at Coningsby to assist Somerset during trials of her Seawolf anti-air missile system.

For the trials a dedicated fighter controller was needed – something Somerset didn't have.

Typically fighter controllers, or Freddies, can only be found in Type 42 destroyers (whose *raison d'être* is air defence) and carriers.

So HMS Gloucester (out of action as she's being refitted in Rosyth) loaned her Freddy in the form of Lt Craig Macpherson for the trials off St Andrews.

For 20 minutes the two RAF jets came under the direction of the Royal Navy (they even changed their digital recognition code to acknowledge the fact, which was nice of them) while Seawolf's radar tracked the pair of fighters.

And with the trial over, the fliers obliged Somerset's ship's company with a flypast and mini aerial display before returning to Lincolnshire.

Somerset has been put through extensive tests and trials since emerging from a refit to improve her weapons systems, sonar and other machinery, and to fit new WECDIS electronic charts and adapt the flight deck for operations by Merlin helicopters.

Those trials have seen her circumnavigate the British Isles: there was a lightning visit to Devonport, the first trip home in more than a year; there were noise ranging trials in the sea lochs of Argyll, a trip around the Isle of Bute and through Loch Fyne (the waterway, not the fish restaurant); there were dolphins riding the bow-wave off Inveraray while underwater microphones gathered reams of data on Somerset's performance; and finally, there were sonar trials off Scotland's northern tip.

"The difference made during five weeks away has been enormous," said Cdr Rob Wilson, Somerset's Commanding Officer.

"The ship's company is now better trained and the equipment has been tested and proved."

You can follow the ongoing exploits of HMS Somerset courtesy of her captain's blog at hms-somerset-co.blogspot.com.

Plumbing old depths

SPECIALIST clearance divers will soon be again able to deal with unexploded devices at depths up to 200ft thanks to new kit being introduced.

The Senior Service has clinched a deal with Aberdeen firm DIVEX for a state-of-the-art piece of re-breathing kit (which recycles a diver's exhaled air so he can continue to operate) which will allow the Portsmouth-based Fleet Diving Squadron to work down to 60 metres – something the divers have not been able to do for the past four years.

The CDLSE (Clearance Divers' Life-Support Equipment) is the most advanced electronic mixture gas re-breather in the world and allows the specialist frogmen to resume the full range of clearance diving tasks.

Unmanned and manned trials of the new breathing apparatus will be conducted over coming months with the first divers from the squadron becoming qualified to operate with CDLSE from November.

The first batches of production sets will be delivered in the middle of next year and the career training will begin at the Defence Diving School on Horsea Island in September 2008.

Although the new apparatus can cope with depths of 60 metres (196 ft) – the depth required by current RN operations – it is capable of going deeper, something diving experts at Fleet Headquarters in Portsmouth are looking at should front-line operations demand it.

"The arrival of the new apparatus will be a major boost to clearance diving and provide the Royal Navy with a first-class diving capability," said Cdr Chris Ameye, the Superintendent of Diving.

Clearance divers have served the Fleet in various guises since 1838, dealing not merely with unexploded ordnance but also engineering tasks beneath the sea.

Most recently, RN divers dealt with Iraqi weaponry in the wake of the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime.

Rio's a grand finale

AFTER almost six months patrolling the not-especially-warm waters around the Falklands, the men and women of HMS Edinburgh finally had the chance to let their hair down in the ultimate party city.

The destroyer spent five days in Rio de Janeiro to give her ship's company some rest and relaxation, and re-fuel and re-stock Edinburgh before she began the long journey home to Portsmouth.

Edinburgh is crewed by the ship's company of HMS Exeter – and Exeter, back on patrol in the UK, conversely is crewed by Edinburgh's ship's company in a 'sea swap' initiative intended to keep ships in operational theatres longer.

Exeter's sailors took charge of their slightly unusual surroundings (Edinburgh is longer, wider and more modern than Exeter) early this year and have been at the heart of Falklands 25 commemorations in the South Atlantic islands.

Those islands are now far behind Edinburgh (her duties have been assumed by sister HMS Southampton, *see page 5*).

And after almost constant activity around the Falklands, it was only fair the sailors were given the chance to unwind.

Rio is on the shopping list of pretty much every sailor deployed to the South Atlantic, while trips to the sands of Copacabana, or the top of Sugar Loaf and Corcovado mountains are a must.

But so too is a visit to Casa Jimmy orphanage, a port of call for every RN/RFA vessel stopping off in Rio.

The home for street kids founded by Led Zeppelin guitarist Jimmy Page has benefitted from sailors' handiwork for a decade.

And so it was that a party from Edinburgh arrived at the orphanage for two days of DIY tasks (although work was delayed by a lack of tools initially...).

The sailors erected a 30ft barbed wire fence on top of the existing wall to keep drug-dealers at bay and installed electrical sockets and telephone connection points inside the orphanage.

Less well known is Casa Roger Turner, a relatively new addition to the numerous shelters and orphanages in Rio.

It takes its name from the former naval attaché in Brazil who was instrumental in encouraging British sailors to help the underprivileged youngsters of Rio.

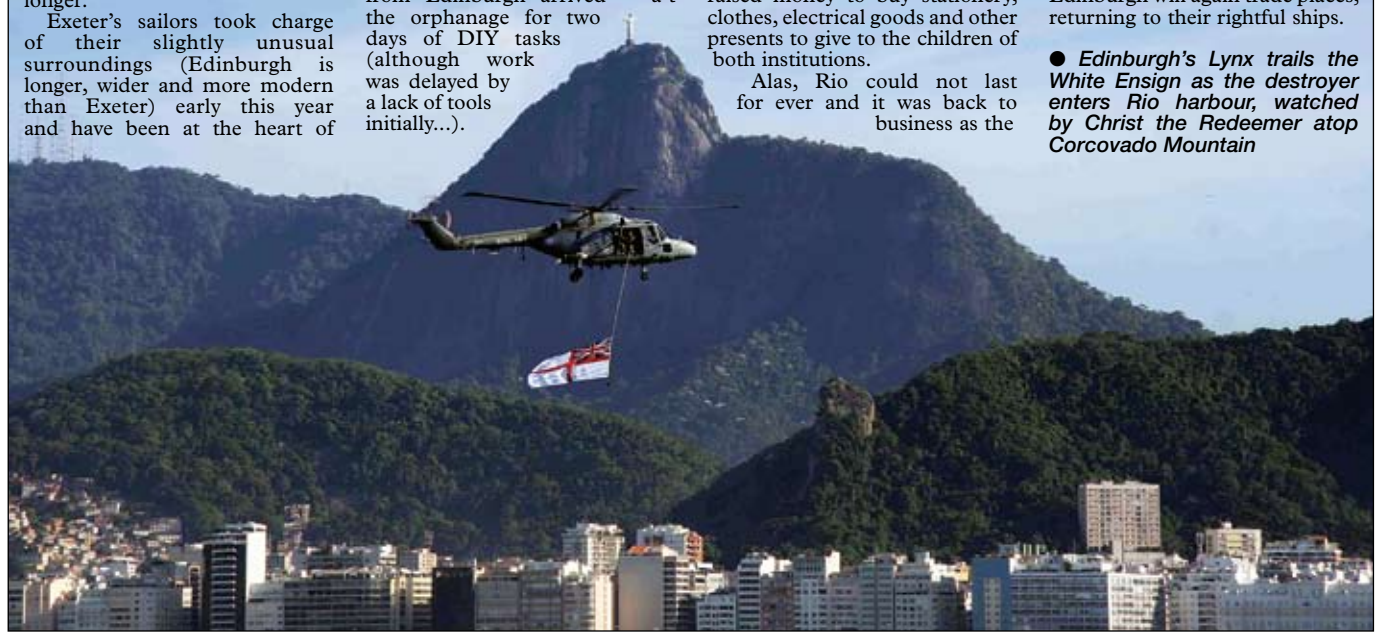
Casa Roger Turner aims to keep Rio's older teenagers off the streets and out of harm's way. It now boasts a revamped stairwell, upstairs loos which are no longer blocked and improved electrical fittings thanks to Jack's efforts.

Throughout Edinburgh's deployment, the ship's company raised money to buy stationery, clothes, electrical goods and other presents to give to the children of both institutions.

Alas, Rio could not last for ever and it was back to business as the ship departed, staging night and daytime exercises with the Brazilian Navy (Rio is the fleet's principal base), including cross-decking – landing foreign helicopters on each other's flight decks – and a search and rescue exercise, with 'volunteers' offering to leap into the South Atlantic to be picked up by Edinburgh's Lynx.

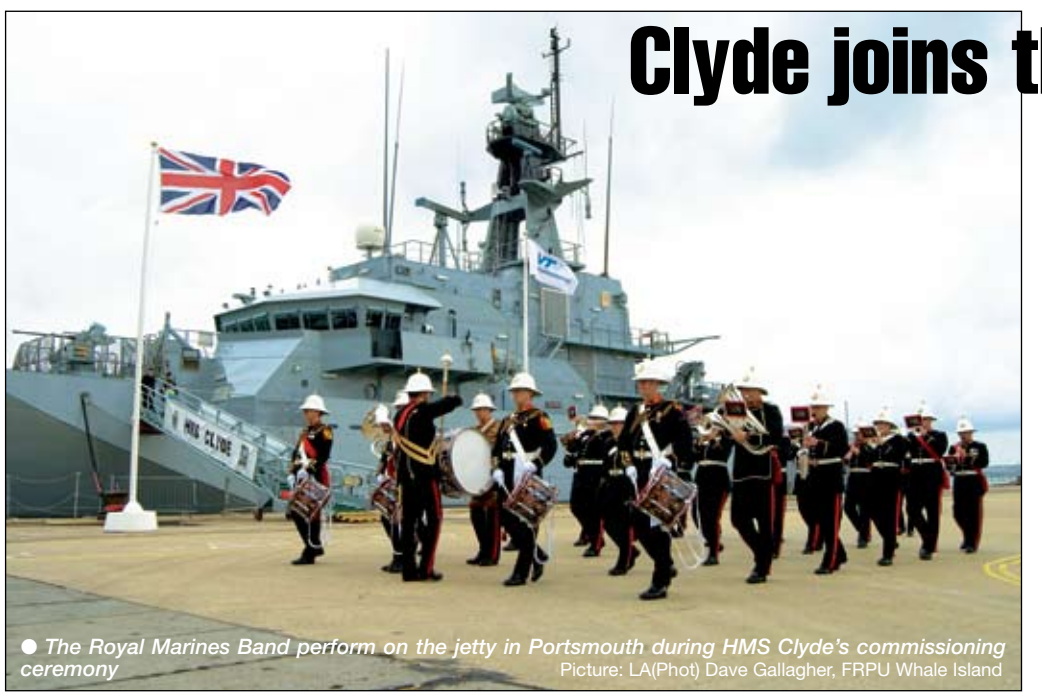
There was no shortage of volunteers fancying a dip as the destroyer headed north and the waters grew warmer, prompting CO Paul Brown to authorise a hands to bathe – assisted by his marine engineering department who knocked up a plank as a launch platform for the swimmers.

Edinburgh is now on her way home to Portsmouth where, following some much-deserved leave, the sailors of Exeter and Edinburgh will again trade places, returning to their rightful ships.



● *Edinburgh's Lynx trails the White Ensign as the destroyer enters Rio harbour, watched by Christ the Redeemer atop Corcovado Mountain*

Clyde joins the Andromeda chain



● *The Royal Marines Band perform on the jetty in Portsmouth during HMS Clyde's commissioning ceremony*

Picture: LA(Phot) Dave Gallagher, FRPU Whale Island

THE first warship built in Portsmouth in four decades has been welcomed into the bosom of the RN family.

Falkland Islands patrol ship HMS Clyde was commissioned in the yard which built her, ten months after a spectacular night-time naming ceremony.

Clyde was built by the VT Group in their state-of-the-art ship hall; the firm owns the patrol ship – and will continue to do so for the first years of her life, leasing her to the RN for duties in the South Atlantic.

And those duties begin shortly. Clyde departs Portsmouth for the Falklands in mid-August.

Upon arrival in the islands she will take over the duties of HMS Dumbarton Castle whose quarter-century career protecting the Falklands is in its twilight.

Clyde's sponsor, Lesley Dunt, was among the guests of honour at the ceremony in Portsmouth Naval Base, where the Royal Marines Band provided suitable martial music and Andrea Hopper, the wife of Cdr Simon Hopper, cut the commissioning cake assisted by 22-year-old AB David Maund, the youngest sailor in the 40-strong ship's company.

"I appreciated from day one that the first ship built in Portsmouth for years would be special," said Cdr Hopper, "but I didn't realise until the naming ceremony what it really meant to the people of the dockyard and businesses in Portsmouth."

Once she departs, Clyde is unlikely to return to the city which built her as she will be on station constantly in and around the Falklands, receiving her overhauls and refits in the southern hemisphere.

Before HMS Clyde, the last ship built in Portsmouth was the Leander-class frigate HMS Andromeda, launched in 1967.

Paper Trail

NOT much nautical has been filling the pages of the national press recently, but we'll begin our *tour d'horizon* with evidence that you can prove anything with statistics...

THE rate at which British troops are being seriously injured or killed on the front line in Afghanistan is about to pass that suffered by our troops during World War 2.

The casualty rate in the most dangerous regions of the country is approaching ten per cent. Senior officers fear it will ultimately pass the 11 per cent experienced by British soldiers at the height of the conflict 60 years ago.

Last November, only three British soldiers were wounded in Afghanistan by the Taliban, compared with 38 in May.

– Daily Telegraph

Good job the *Telegraph* statisticians weren't working on July 1 1916...

The regional papers have been focusing on the 'battle of the bases' and the ongoing review into the future of the RN's three principal bases:

DEFENCE chiefs have revealed that there are three options for their controversial review of the country's three naval bases.

Defence minister Derek Twigg outlined the options to Parliament:

- Reducing facilities and staffing at all three bases
- 'Minimising' Portsmouth through the withdrawal of all ships to leave it as an 'administrative centre'
- 'Minimising' Devonport by removing all ships and submarines based there and leaving the site as an engineering and maintenance facility.

Mr Twigg did rule out the total closure of any base.

– Portsmouth News

PORTSMOUTH FC's waterfront stadium could pose a risk to security at the naval base.

The Royal Navy has raised concerns about developments overlooking the historic dockyard.

The Navy Board raised fears over the now-defunct Project Prime development which would have seen some of the Historic Dockyard's old buildings transformed into homes, offices and shops.

"The Navy don't want someone to lean out of window with a rocket-propelled grenade and fire one into a ship," said council leader Gerald Vernon-Jackson.

– Portsmouth News

And finally, the obligatory fluffy animal story...

GUARDS protecting 42 Commando's Bickleigh Barracks have been forced to ground one of their patrol vehicles because a pied wagtail has built a nest underneath and is raising a brood of chicks.

The guards were first alerted when they saw a wagtail flying from under the Ford Ranger whenever it departed on duties; the bird would then wait for the vehicle to return.

– Plymouth Herald

● *Corps blimey... Illustrious' flight deck is crammed with US Marine Corps AV8B Harriers as an MV-22 Osprey lifts off and (below) ten jump jets from the Great American Bulldogs – Marine Attack Squadron 223 – are lined up on Lusty as well as the Osprey*

Pictures: PO(Phot) Christine Wood and LA(Phot) Darby Allen, HMS Illustrious

Home of the AV8ers

RARE birds have taken nest on Britain's strike carrier off the Eastern Seaboard of the United States.

For the first time HMS Illustrious has been home to two of the most potent aircraft in the US Armed Forces' arsenal.

One had a familiar outline; the other was like nothing the flight deck crew had seen before.

Fourteen US Marine Corps' AV8Bs – the American version of Britain's legendary Harrier – are using Lusty as their base for war games in the Atlantic.

Also setting down on the carrier's deck was a far stranger sight – a Marine Corps MV-22 Osprey.

Osprey is the world's first tilt-rotor aircraft – it can land, take-off and hover like a helicopter, but once airborne can fly like a traditional propeller-driven aircraft at speeds over 300mph and heights above 25,000ft.

Osprey has had a drawn-out and, admittedly, chequered history, but it can carry more troops faster and further into battle than the US Marine Corps' traditional CH46 Sea Knight helicopters.

Lusty's flight deck was understandably packed with crew eager to see this rather ungainly bird land ahead of the Joint Task Exercise involving three carrier task groups off the east coast of the US, one led by Illustrious.

There are no plans yet by Whitehall to buy or operate the Osprey from British warships – but given the UK's global operations alongside the USA, the ability to fly the Osprey from RN carriers is a capability well worth investing in, especially as the Marine Corps are likely to deploy Osprey overseas for the first time later this year.

As for the AV8Bs, they brought 200 US Marine Corps personnel led by Col Eric 'Beans' Van Camp, plus one Royal Marine.

Pilot Maj Jim Dresner is on exchange with the US Harrier force, Marine Aircraft Group 14, based at Cherry Point in North Carolina.

"My exchange with the US Marine Corps has been fantastic, but flying from Illustrious for this exercise is one of the highlights," the green beret enthused.

Before the arrival of the American aviators, Illustrious and her trusty escort HMS Manchester paid a high-profile visit to the city that never sleeps.

This was the first visit to Manhattan by a British flat-top since Lusty's sister Invincible called in back in 2004 – a visit which also coincided with July 4 celebrations.

And one thing is essential when in New York: a rig run. Everyone, as we know, loves a sailor.

"It was a fantastic experience to walk around New York, to see famous landmarks such as the Empire State Building, and to speak to New Yorkers who were very keen to capture us on photograph and listen to a sea dit or two," said Lusty's AB(WS) Parkinson.

There was a sobering moment for some of Illustrious' ship's company at the site of the World Trade Center.

CO Capt Tim Fraser and the ship's chaplain Fr David Yates laid a wreath at Ground Zero and gave a brief eulogy in honour of the victims of the 9/11 atrocities.

On a happier note, Lusty's sports teams clashed with local professional and NYPD sides on the football, rugby and hockey pitches; the latter clash saw the closest result with the flat-top going down 5-4 to Rye Field, one of the top amateur sides in the USA.

Manchester made a lightning dash across the Atlantic to ensure she would be in the Big Apple for Independence Day celebrations.

Barely a week before July 4 the Busy Bee was something of a building site as RN and FSL engineers worked around the clock to revamp three of the destroyer's four diesel generators (a new radar aerial was also thrown into the mix to add to the 'fun').

And so it was that Lusty sailed on ahead, with Manchester departing Pompey two days behind.

A mid-ocean rendezvous was hastily arranged with RFA Fort George for refuelling – if the two ships missed the meet-up for any reason Manchester's visit to New York would be off.

Thankfully, they did not fail to meet – although 24 hours later the destroyer was tossed about in 35ft seas and battered by 55kt winds which would have prevented any mid-Atlantic refuelling.

So severe was the weather in the ocean that it flooded the destroyer's 4.5in turret and shorted an electrical circuit – promptly fixed by CPO Daryl Griffiths and his team to allow the gun to work once more.

With all the dramas dealt with Manchester sailed up the East River to Brooklyn where her berth afforded the ship's company a magnificent view of the Manhattan skyline.

Upon completion of the war games, Illustrious is due to visit Charleston before heading back across the Pond with her faithful escort.



Money alone cannot help

THROWING money at Naval recruitment and retention will not get to the root of the problem, a senior group of MPs warns.

The House of Commons Public Accounts Committee, which scrutinises the way Whitehall spends your money, has investigated how all three Services find fresh blood and attempt to hold on to existing personnel.

Its report says cash incentives only act as short-term panacea and do not address the real reasons why many Service personnel opt to leave the Forces.

The RN uses 'golden handcuff' payments to entice people into certain branches or arms of the service, such as submarines, or to hold on to key personnel who are particularly expensive to train, such as Harrier pilots, or in areas where there are shortages, such as nuclear watchkeepers.

The committee says such schemes do work to a degree – but for many sailors and marines choosing to return to civvy street, money is not the issue: the inability to plan for the future and the impact on family life are key areas which cause Servicemen and women to hand in their notices.

The Navy is still suffering (and will continue to suffer for at least another decade) for a recruitment freeze, presently causing a shortage of petty officers.

That short-term decision back in the 90s to curb recruitment will actually cost the RN more money to rectify in the long run, the report warns – and will never adequately solve the problem.

And although the Navy is meeting its 'harmony time' guidelines – the balance for sailors and marines between time spent on deployments and time in the UK – the report says that ships are sailing generally lacking one in every eight sailors.

The committee says cash bonuses such as the £2,240 tax-free handout to personnel deployed in Iraq, Afghanistan and Bosnia announced last autumn should be welcomed.

But it adds that the MOD must do more to help personnel plan their careers and lives so that they strike a happier work-life balance.

The committee also believes much more could be done to make the officer corps better reflect society as a whole.

Six out of the ten most senior officers in the Senior Service attended public/independent rather than state schools.

The RN is promotes 100 men and women from the ranks to officer every year – a figure which has remained consistent since the turn of the century.

Defence Minister Derek Twigg accepted some – though not all – of the committee's findings and recommendations: "Our Armed Forces have magnificently risen to the challenge. I want to re-emphasise that the Government is committed to listening to our people, responding to their concerns."

Black period for Orion

THE ships of Task Force Orion – four minehunters plus an RFA mother ship – have been scattered across the Black Sea and Dardanelles as their summer deployment reached its climax.

The Bulgarian city of Varna was the first port of call for the warships – HM Ships Shoreham, Walney, Atherstone and Hurworth – after squeezing through the Bosphorus, the historic boundary between Europe and Asia.

This was not the first time the Royal Navy had arrived in strength in Varna.

One hundred and 53 years before, the port was a major staging post for British and French ships and ground forces engaged in conflict across the Black Sea in the Crimea.

Disease dogged the Crimean War and 850 British servicemen from 26 regiments of the British Army and the Royal Marines fell victim to cholera while stationed in Varna.

They are honoured by an unassuming obelisk next to the Bulgarian Naval Academy.

And it was there that Orion's Commanding Officer Cdr Chris Davies and Britain's Defence Attaché Cdr Peter Morris could be found laying a wreath in honour of men who set out to fight the Russian bear but instead were struck down by illness.

"The local municipality has been fantastic at maintaining this tribute to men who died in the service of our country," said Cdr Morris.

Varna proved to be a popular, if brief, port of call (the force was only in for three days).

Aside from boasting fine weather, fine architecture and lively night-life, the city also boasts fine beaches... which just happened to be five minutes from the naval base.

Bringing Orion bang up to date, there were exercises for the force with the Bulgarian Navy before the British ships dispersed.

HMS Shoreham and Walney made for Istanbul, Atherstone and Hurworth made a leisurely crossing of the Black Sea bound for the great fortress and port of Sevastopol.

Although now part of the Ukraine, the Crimean city is home to both the Ukrainian and Russian Black Sea Fleets.

The port also, says Atherstone's crew, does not share the decay and run-down nature of some other places in the Soviet Union.

And like Varna, Sevastopol is rich in Crimean War heritage – the city was besieged by British and French forces for 11 months, defiance celebrated by Franz Roubaud's huge panorama in a museum which was a place of pilgrimage for many of Atherstone's and Hurworth's sailors.

So too was Balaclava and the valley where the Light Brigade infamously charged to their doom, just north of Sevastopol.

But for most of the sailors, simply wandering the streets of a port steeped in history was sufficient – not least because just a decade ago Sevastopol was off-limits, not merely to visiting navies, but non-Sevastopolians who had to apply for a permit to visit.

The duo departed Sevastopol to rejoin Walney and Shoreham in Istanbul, the first stage on the long journey home.

As Atherstone entered the Bosphorus, the British Consul in Istanbul Ms Barbara Hay climbed on board for the two-hour passage of the famous waterway.

She was safely put back on dry land when the four warships linked up at the Golden Horn.

Some sailors decided to make the (admittedly rather long) journey from Istanbul to Gallipoli and the Dardanelles peninsula to visit the battlefields of the Great War.

Others preferred to enjoy the hospitality offered by the consulate who organised a sports day.

Then it was off to the northern Aegean to finally rejoin command vessel RFA Cardigan Bay (size limitations prevented her from joining the mine warfare ships in the Black Sea) to continue the passage home via Malta.

Mine warfare duties have been put slightly on the backburner on Orion's return journey to the UK, with Atherstone and Walney joining the war on terror at sea by conducting maritime security patrols in the western Mediterranean.

The minehunting force is due home this month; Shoreham and Walney return to Faslane, Atherstone and Hurworth to Portsmouth.



● *HMS Atherstone sails gracefully into Varna*
Picture: PO(Phot) Gary Davies, FRPU Whale Island

Iraq's Navy back on patrol

IRAQI sailors and marines are defending the oil platforms which are their lifeblood after passing their sternest test yet.

A Royal Navy-led team of experts has been providing training and guidance to the post-Saddam Iraqi Navy since the toppling of the tyrant four years ago.

The Naval Transition Team (NaTT) helped design a gruelling series of challenges and tests – fire-fighting, damage control, gunnery and force protection – to prepare the patrol boat crews for duties at sea, defending coastal waters and the oil platforms.

Having given four years of instruction, the NaTT sailors stood back and let their Iraqi counterparts take charge, chiefly offering advice as the fledgling Navy was tested by Exercise Smoking Barrel.

The exercise, observed by staff from Combined Task Force 158 – the group of international warships which patrol the northern Gulf, led by HMS Cornwall and Cdre Nick Lambert at present – was designed to see whether the Iraqis could respond to a series of fast and furious tests, notably raids by fast attack craft from the US Navy.

With Smoking Barrel over, the CTF 158 staff gathered the Iraqis and their NaTT mentors. Their words after the opening 'Pass' were drowned out by the cheering Iraqi sailors.

"The NaTT has been working really hard with the Iraqi Naval Training School over the past two months and it's a great day to see the Iraqi Navy back on patrol," said Lt James Taylor, one of two principal patrol boat mentors.

The resumption of patrols by Iraqi boats is the first step down a long road which will eventually see the Iraqi Navy, based in Umm Qasr, take full responsibility for the security of their national waters.



● *An Iraqi sailor on the stern gun of a Iraqi Navy patrol boat in the Khawr Abd Allah*

And that means that the NaTT will remain in Iraq for the foreseeable future, but its CO Capt Tim Stockings believes the work of the team is perhaps not fully appreciated by the rest of the RN/RM, not least because events elsewhere in Iraq often cloud people's opinion of the country.

"The NaTT is an unalloyed success – the Iraqi Navy are coming on in leaps and bounds and are by far the most progressive of the Iraqi Armed Forces," he pointed out.

"The Iraqis are charming people, battling to triumph in adversity, and we all find the contact we have with them is the real pleasure of being in Umm Qasr and one of the greatest rewards on offer."

The captain is looking for volunteers from across the RN and RM to build on the existing success from leading hand up to lieutenant commander ranks or equivalent.

"Every single member of the team has a key role to play here – some of my best mentors are also my most junior," Capt Stockings added.

More details can be found at www.royalnavy.mod.uk/NaTT; sailors looking to join the team can e-mail Capt Stockings at co@natt-iraq.net.

The Royal Navy & Royal Marines Children's Fund

Registered Charity No. 1075015

PATRON: HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

The RN & RM Childrens is a National Charity based in Portsmouth. We care for children of men and women who have served or are serving in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines.

Originally set up as an orphanage, we now assist children with a wide range of needs and at times of family crisis.

Applications can be made at any time. Those seeking assistance can contact the office direct for an application form:-

Monique Bateman
or Laurene Smith
RN & RM Children's Fund
311 Twyford Avenue
Portsmouth
PO2 8RN
Telephone: 023 9263 9534
Fax: 023 9267 7574
Email: rnchildren@btconnect.com

Crest NICHOLSON

Sail into a new home with our exclusive incentives

Only for naval personnel at Gosport!



View from Millennium Bridge at Gosport

At Gosport, Crest Nicholson is offering a range of contemporary 2 bedroom apartments close to the water's edge. And now, especially for naval personnel, benefit from Stamp Duty paid, fully fitted carpets and £500 towards your legal fees – see the voucher below.

With easy access to Portsmouth Harbour, Gunwharf Quays, beaches and sports facilities, and this exclusive new offer, Crest Nicholson at Gosport is the ideal new naval base.

Call or visit today for further information on the properties available!





2 bedroom apartments **from £147,950**

Reserve your brand new apartment by Crest Nicholson in Gosport and benefit from*:

- Stamp Duty paid
- Fully fitted carpets
- £500 towards legal fees

Simply cut out and bring this voucher with you when you reserve your new home to make sure you benefit from this exclusive incentive.

*This offer is available in accordance with Crest Nicholson's terms and conditions to naval personnel only and is subject to availability. It is only valid if this voucher is presented at time of reservation. Retrospective submissions will NOT be accepted. Only one voucher per reservation. For further information please consult the Sales Advisor. Redemption value 0.001p. Prices correct at time of going to press.

VOUCHER

Hurry! Final few apartments remaining!

Marketing Suite and Show Apartments open daily 10am - 5pm

(Follow signs to the Explosion Museum)

www.crestnicholson.com/gosport

0870 751 0490

Penzance arrives in nick of time

MINEHUNTER HMS Penzance broke off from survey work in Scottish waters to stop a fishing vessel sinking.

The Prospect was going down by the bow and her two crew had already abandoned her when the Sandown-class ship responded to the mayday calls.

Two hours later, Penzance was off the Isle of Bute where lifeboats from Largs and Tighnabruaich were already on the scene, using their pumps to bale out Prospect.

But the RNLI crews were losing the battle. In the 15 minutes before Penzance arrived, the fishing vessel had sunk more than 3ft – and within another ten she would be gone completely.

Four crew from Penzance were hurriedly ferried across to the stricken vessel with an emergency pump and within another 15 minutes had the Prospect back on an even keel.

Further inspection revealed a faulty sea cock in the trawler's bilge, which the Penzance team promptly fixed.

"The party had minutes to assess an extremely hazardous situation and make decisions which ultimately resulted in the saving not only of the vessel, but also the livelihoods of the fishermen," said Penzance's CO Lt Cdr John Craig.

"It's an excellent example of what can be achieved when people pull together for the common good."

It's been quite an eventful summer for the Faslane-based warship (which is actually crewed by the good folk of HMS Blyth... whose ship, in turn, is being looked after in the Gulf by Penzance's sailors).

Penzance has been working off the west coast of Scotland conducting seabed survey work, especially around the Orkneys and Shetlands.

Off Sullom Voe in the latter, PO(D) Alan Dickman found a British Mk15 buoyant mine, still sitting in its launch trolley.

The explosive had once been part of a minefield to protect locally-based Catalina flying boats from attacks by U-boats.

Diver Ryan Campbell fixed a plastic charge to the rusting device, which was safely blown up – after local farmers and oil workers had been warned.

And whilst in the Shetlands, the ship paid its respects at the wreck of the Royal Oak.

Divers inspected the state of the sunken battleship and the White Ensign (replaced each year by comrades from the Northern Diving Group).

"The ship is in excellent condition – and absolutely enormous," said XO Lt Chris Flaherty.

"It was also very eerie and I was humbled at the thought of those fellow sailors who lost their lives."

● *HMS Portland (foreground) in company with the Russian cruiser Admiral Chabanyenko in the surprisingly-glassy mid-Atlantic*



No fracas over FRUKUS

FROM Force for Good to Four for Good...

Frigate HMS Portland joined an international group of warships from the USA, Russia and France for the annual FRUKUS exercise to foster warm relations between nations of the sea.

FRUKUS – France, Russia, UK and USA – has been around since the late 1980s, as RUKUS, until the French joined in in 2002, with the four nations taking it in turn to run the war games.

This year, that honour fell to the Americans, with the force mustering in Norfolk, Virginia.

Portland had already joined up with the Russian participant – cruiser Admiral Chabanyenko, part of the Northern Fleet in Severomorsk – as she steamed across the Atlantic.

The duo conducted various manoeuvres, including landing the Chabanyenko's twin-rotor Helix helicopter on Portland's stern – a challenge for aircrew and the flight deck team alike.

The Russian and British warships accompanied each other almost to within sight of American shores, where they were joined by the other FRUKUS participants: Arleigh Burke destroyer USS Laboon and French stealth frigate FS La Fayette.

First the quartet got down to the serious business: a sports' day, involving football, softball, volleyball and tug-of-war, which Portland narrowly won.

While the sailors grappled on the sports field, bigwigs conferred to discuss how the exercise should run and how the four nations should best communicate.

With the talks and sports over, the quartet put to sea for the core element of FRUKUS.

The key aim is to see whether a diverse task force can enforce a (fictitious) UN Security Council Resolution.

A myriad of tests, exercises and manoeuvres ensued: helicopter operations, attacks by small fast craft, air assaults, man overboard drills, culminating in Russian Naval Infantry storming Portland, playing the role of suspicious merchantman MV Death Star.

Portland's boarding party responded by searching the Russian vessel, re-titled MV Grizzly.

All four ships and their companies were marked and assessed by a panel of experts; combined with victory on the sports field, Portland's performance at the business end earned her sailors the title of top FRUKUS, the third successive year a Royal Navy warship has lifted the trophy.

FRUKUS was the curtain-raiser to Portland's Caribbean deployment, where she has taken over from HMS Ocean in the war on drug-runners, as well as being on station during the hurricane season.

And with that latter role in mind, the Devonport-based frigate sailed into the Turks and Caicos Islands with vital rescue kit aboard.

The warship offered to ferry fire-fighting and hydraulic rescue tools across the Atlantic donated by their Dutch manufacturers Holmatro.

After handing over the equipment in Grand Turk, Portland sailed west along the chain to Providenciales, the first time a British warship has visited the most populous island in the British Overseas Territory in two decades.

There the theme of disaster relief persisted, with Portland's sailors discussing the best possible ways to cope with a natural disaster – chiefly a tropical storm – should it strike Providenciales.

Further visits in the region are planned, including Grand Cayman and Jamaica, and Portland will remain in the Caribbean throughout the 2007 hurricane season before returning to Devonport.



● *All smiles... Sailors line up on the flight deck for Portland's arrival in Bridgetown, Barbados*

● *(Below) Portland's flight deck officer guides the rather ungainly Russian Helix helicopter in to land*

Pictures: LA(Phot) Luis Holden, FRPU Whale Island/Lt Cdr 'Harry' Palmer



specialist legal advice to forces personnel

Suffered a Military Injury?
We deal with all types of injury claim involving the military.
We can assist you with your claim under the new AFCS and advise you on whether to pursue your claim in the civil courts under our 'no win no fee' specialist military legal advice scheme.



Police Interview/ Courts Martial
Nigel Burn and Gilbert Blades are well known for their Courts Martial expertise throughout the UK and Europe.

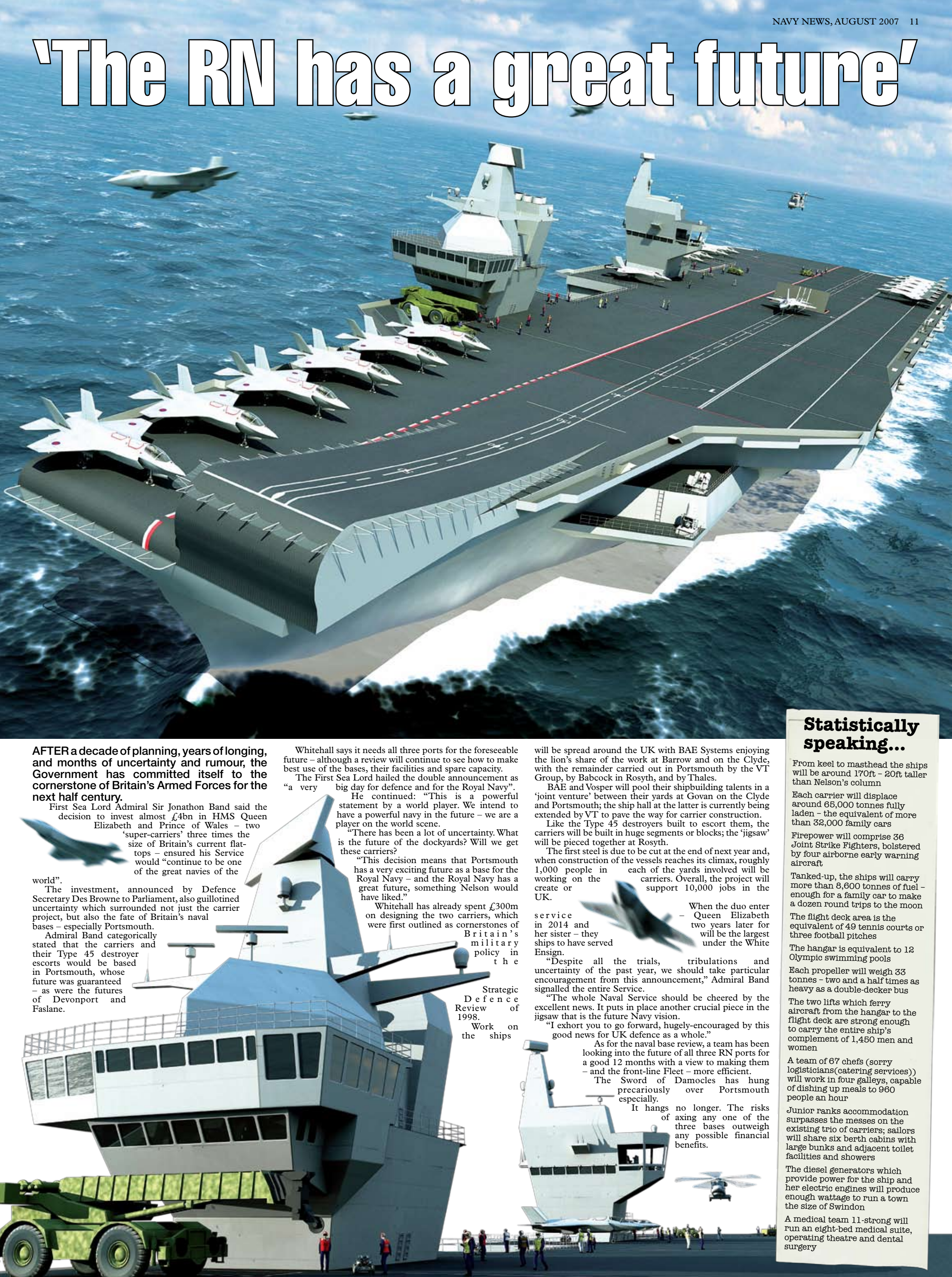
We can also advise on:
Employment Issues
Family Problems
House Purchases
Wills

contact
Nigel Burn or Tean Butcher
Bank Street, Lincoln LN2 1DR
Tel: 01522 512345 between 9am - 5.15pm
or for Military Discipline Matters only contact
Nigel Burn Mob: 07775 860608 after 6pm
www.wilkinchapman.co.uk

wilkin chapman epton blades
solicitors

A LEADING SPECIALIST IN MILITARY LAW

'The RN has a great future'



AFTER a decade of planning, years of longing, and months of uncertainty and rumour, the Government has committed itself to the cornerstone of Britain's Armed Forces for the next half century.

First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Jonathon Band said the decision to invest almost £4bn in HMS Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales – two 'super-carriers' three times the size of Britain's current flat-tops – ensured his Service would "continue to be one of the great navies of the world".

The investment, announced by Defence Secretary Des Browne to Parliament, also guillotined uncertainty which surrounded not just the carrier project, but also the fate of Britain's naval bases – especially Portsmouth.

Admiral Band categorically stated that the carriers and their Type 45 destroyer escorts would be based in Portsmouth, whose future was guaranteed – as were the futures of Devonport and Faslane.

Whitehall says it needs all three ports for the foreseeable future – although a review will continue to see how to make best use of the bases, their facilities and spare capacity.

The First Sea Lord hailed the double announcement as "a very big day for defence and for the Royal Navy".

He continued: "This is a powerful statement by a world player. We intend to have a powerful navy in the future – we are a player on the world scene.

"There has been a lot of uncertainty. What is the future of the dockyards? Will we get these carriers?

"This decision means that Portsmouth has a very exciting future as a base for the Royal Navy – and the Royal Navy has a great future, something Nelson would have liked."

Whitehall has already spent £300m on designing the two carriers, which were first outlined as cornerstones of Britain's military policy in the Strategic Defence Review of 1998.

Work on the ships will be spread around the UK with BAE Systems enjoying the lion's share of the work at Barrow and on the Clyde, with the remainder carried out in Portsmouth by the VT Group, by Babcock in Rosyth, and by Thales.

BAE and Vosper will pool their shipbuilding talents in a 'joint venture' between their yards at Govan on the Clyde and Portsmouth; the ship hall at the latter is currently being extended by VT to pave the way for carrier construction.

Like the Type 45 destroyers built to escort them, the carriers will be built in huge segments or blocks; the 'jigsaw' will be pieced together at Rosyth.

The first steel is due to be cut at the end of next year and, when construction of the vessels reaches its climax, roughly 1,000 people in each of the yards involved will be working on the carriers. Overall, the project will create or support 10,000 jobs in the UK.

When the duo enter service – Queen Elizabeth in 2014 and two years later for her sister – they will be the largest ships to have served under the White Ensign.

"Despite all the trials, tribulations and uncertainty of the past year, we should take particular encouragement from this announcement," Admiral Band signalled the entire Service.

"The whole Naval Service should be cheered by the excellent news. It puts in place another crucial piece in the jigsaw that is the future Navy vision.

"I exhort you to go forward, hugely-encouraged by this good news for UK defence as a whole."

As for the naval base review, a team has been looking into the future of all three RN ports for a good 12 months with a view to making them – and the front-line Fleet – more efficient.

The Sword of Damocles has hung precariously over Portsmouth especially.

It hangs no longer. The risks of axing any one of the three bases outweigh any possible financial benefits.

Statistically speaking...

From keel to masthead the ships will be around 170ft – 20ft taller than Nelson's column

Each carrier will displace around 65,000 tonnes fully laden – the equivalent of more than 32,000 family cars

Firepower will comprise 36 Joint Strike Fighters, bolstered by four airborne early warning aircraft

Tanked-up, the ships will carry more than 8,600 tonnes of fuel – enough for a family car to make a dozen round trips to the moon

The flight deck area is the equivalent of 49 tennis courts or three football pitches

The hangar is equivalent to 12 Olympic swimming pools

Each propeller will weigh 33 tonnes – two and a half times as heavy as a double-decker bus

The two lifts which ferry aircraft from the hangar to the flight deck are strong enough to carry the entire ship's complement of 1,450 men and women

A team of 67 chefs (sorry logisticians(catering services)) will work in four galleys, capable of dishing up meals to 960 people an hour

Junior ranks accommodation surpasses the messes on the existing trio of carriers; sailors will share six berth cabins with large bunks and adjacent toilet facilities and showers

The diesel generators which provide power for the ship and her electric engines will produce enough wattage to run a town the size of Swindon

A medical team 11-strong will run an eight-bed medical suite, operating theatre and dental surgery

SHIPS OF THE ROYAL NAVY No.621

All-'sea'ing Argus

PROVEN in the theatre of the Falklands War, the container ship Contender Bezant became the Royal Fleet Auxiliary Argus in 1988 – and after a £12 million package of work the UK's Primary Casualty Receiving Ship has a bright future that extends to 2020.

RFA Argus has two roles – principally she is an aviation training ship that can work with any of the Navy's helicopters, but she also holds within her capacious frame a hospital with 100 beds and surgical theatres with four operating tables.

Recent months have brought the Lynx helicopters of 702 NAS on board the auxiliary ship, where the trainee pilots were put through their paces before moving on to the front-line Flights of 815 NAS.

Her recent upgrade with A&P in Falmouth has seen the operational life of the auxiliary ship extended out to 2020; and has secured a 'through-life' partnership deal with the ship-repair firm that will keep Argus at her prime.

It is hoped that the 'through-life' approach will produce a dedicated team at A&P Falmouth who know the ship well and as the ship will be homeported in Falmouth it will allow a 'little and often' approach to the ship's maintenance.

As the tenth in a long line of ships with the name Argus that have served with the Royal Navy, the present RFA stands proudly alongside her antecedents – as well as her induction into the Fleet at the Falklands, she served in the 1991 Gulf War, supported UN operations as conflict raged in the former Yugoslavia, and became informally known as BUPA Baghdad during the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

The name Argus first appeared in the RN on a French privateer captured in 1799, then ran through a series of ships of differing size and shape until the precursor to the modern RFA Argus set a new example to the world – she was the world's first aircraft carrier to have a full-length flight deck for wheeled aircraft.

Reminiscent of the present Argus, she began life under build as the passenger liner Conte Rosso in Glasgow, but halted by the onset of World War 1 she was bought unfinished by the Royal Navy and converted into the carrier HMS Argus in 1918.

Argus was also primarily an aviation training ship, initially as pilots learnt to operate from such a ship for the first time, then later in training the pilots for their front-line roles as better war-designed carriers came into service.

This ship ended her service life in 1946, with a Naval career that spanned almost 30 years – a record that the current RFA Argus looks set to beat.





Battle Honours

Groix Island..... 1795
Ashantee.....1873-74
Arctic..... 1941
Atlantic.....1941-42
Malta Convoys..... 1942
North Africa..... 1942
Kuwait 1991
(Falkland Islands..... 1982
as Contender Bezant)

Facts and figures

Class: Aviation Training Ship and Primary Casualty Receiving Ship
Pennant Number: A135
Builder: Cantiere Navale, Breda, Italy as the Contender Bezant.
Converted by: Harland and Wolff, Belfast
In service: 1988
Displacement: 28,081 tonnes
Length: 175.1 metres
Breadth: 30.4 metres
Draught: 8.1 metres
Speed: 18 knots
Complement: 80 Royal Fleet Auxiliary and 50 Royal Navy personnel
Aviation: Five spots for Chinook, Merlin, Sea King, Lynx or Apache
Armament: Four 20mm GAMBO, four 7.62mm machine gun

● *RFA Argus at the Fleet Review for the Queen's Golden Jubilee*
Picture: PO(Phot) 'Stevo' Russell-Stevenson

NAVY NEWS

Reporting from the Fleet...



Available at your local newsagent and selected supermarkets

To receive a copy subscribe today using the form on page 32



www.navynews.co.uk

HEROES OF THE ROYAL NAVY No.40

Lt Edmund Geoffrey Abbott AM

IN the murk of a January afternoon less than two months after the guns of the Western Front had fallen silent, the grey lines of Kaiser Wilhelm's flagship SMS Baden emerged from the Orkney mist.

She was the seventy-fourth – and final – ship of the once great *Hochseeflotte* (High Seas Fleet) to be interned at the Royal Navy's most northerly base, Scapa Flow.

And there she lay at anchor for more than five months until 10.30am on Saturday June 21 1919 when Vizeadmiral Ludwig von Reuter issued the order: "Paragraph 11. Confirm."

The signal sparked the greatest act of self-destruction in naval history – 'the grand scuttle' – as the Kaiser's fleet destroyed itself to prevent it falling into the victors' hands.

Baden was among the last to respond to the signal. With the Scapa waters gushing through her scuttles, she was taken in tow by the tender Flying Kestrel and hauled towards the shore.

Baden was the only capital ship not to sink that Saturday. She was refloated and eventually towed to Invergordon for refitting.

And it was there, six weeks after the grand scuttle that the battleship was rocked by an explosion as she sat in dry dock.

As smoke billowed from a ladder leading to a cooling plant, Lt Edmund Geoffrey Abbott rushed to investigate.

The fumes and smoke on the port side of the Baden proved impenetrable, but the starboard side was relatively smoke-free. Abbott rounded up several workers and sailors and led them through a tunnel to the cooling plant compartment where they found one man unconscious.

The body was carried to the upper deck but the worker was already dead.

Not so a second shipwright in the compartment. His groans had been heard by the rescue party on their first foray. Abbott led them back and although the officer was badly affected by the acrid smoke and caustic fumes, he managed to haul the injured worker to safety.

It was an act which earned the 24-year-old torpedo warfare specialist the Albert Medal in gold for lifesaving – forerunner of the George Cross.

Edmund Abbott joined the RN in 1915 and continued to serve under the White Ensign until 1948, chiefly in torpedo-related postings. His final duty, however, was to serve as the Naval Aide de Camp to George VI. He died in Berkshire in 1974.

As for the Baden, her conversion into a gunnery target continued. She was pummeled by the guns of the monitors Erebus and Terror, by bombs dropped by aircraft, and by the main guns of the Atlantic Fleet.

She succumbed to the pounding south-west of Portsmouth on August 16 1921.



Lynx loose on moor

UP, UP and away... Aircrew prepare to lift a load off the barren Dartmoor terrain during a new phase in training Lynx fliers – coping with operations over the land.

With the Lynx of 815 Naval Air Squadron increasingly being called upon to fly over land or shores on missions – as we reported in our feature last month – front-line training has been adapted to reflect that shift.

So enter four observers, three pilots and several maintainers from 702 Naval Air Squadron – the Lynx conversion experts who prepare rookie aircrew for operational deployments with their sister unit 815.

They left the comfort of RNAS Yeovilton behind and decamped to Okehampton on the edge of Dartmoor for three days of operations and exercises in the field, exercises more regularly performed by their Junglie counterparts.

Given three Lynx to work with, the trainees were given a range of missions to complete from firing a .5 machine-gun from the cabin, to dropping and picking up troops, slinging loads beneath the helicopter, search and rescue flights and, perhaps most exhilarating of all, evading RN Hawk jets looking for prey as they raced over the Dartmoor terrain.

These were all manoeuvres the 702 team had completed before – but at Yeovilton, not at the rather less plush surroundings of Okehampton Camp where facilities are, shall we say, rather more basic.

"The detachment to Okehampton was a huge success – and has highlighted the benefits of incorporating this type of training into our syllabus," said Cdr Kevin Fleming, 702's Commanding Officer.

"It's not just important for flying training, but also important for improving command and leadership training of all the squadron's personnel."

The aim is to make the time on Dartmoor a permanent fixture in future 702 NAS training programmes.

Picture: LA(Phot) Billy Bunting, RNAS Yeovilton

EXCLUSIVE DISCOUNTS
www.vauxhall-military.co.uk

savings
across the Vauxhall range



WHAT CAR? CAR OF THE YEAR 2007 CAR OF THE YEAR

ARE YOU ELIGIBLE?*
Find out if you're eligible for our exclusive military discounts across the Vauxhall Range by visiting
www.vauxhall-military.co.uk

VAUXHALL New Corsa and Astra TwinTop
For full details of eligibility and great savings on Agila, New Corsa, New Look Meriva, Tigra, Astra, Astra TwinTop, Zafira, New Vectra, New Signum and Monaro visit **www.vauxhall-military.co.uk** and register today

*Military discounts are available to all serving members of the Armed Forces, Retired Service Personnel, MOD Civilian Personnel and HM Forces Reservists. The offer is also extended to the spouse/partner of the eligible applicant. No other marketing programmes apply.

Official Government Environmental Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO_2 emissions (g/km). New Corsa range: Urban – from 32.1 (8.8) to 48.7 (5.8), Extra-urban – from 48.7 (5.8) to 74.3 (3.8), Combined – from 40.9 (6.9) to 61.4 (4.6). CO_2 emissions from 124 to 166g/km. Astra TwinTop range: Urban – from 21.2 (13.3) to 37.2 (7.6), Extra-urban – from 38.7 (7.3) to 55.4 (5.1), Combined – from 29.7 (9.5) to 47.1 (6.0). CO_2 emissions from 160 to 228g/km.

Monmouth at apogee

HMS MONMOUTH is at the furthest point of her marathon deployment – but the waters Down Under are proving far from smooth.

After a bumpy crossing of the Timor Sea, the Black Duke put into Darwin, the first RN ship to visit Australia since 2003.

A round of social and civic events ensued, including the attendance by Monmouth's CO, Cdr Tim Peacock, and a small group of sailors at the Territory Day ceremonies.

The ship's rugby team registered a 20-20 draw with the Stray Cats, while the footballers notched an 8-2 win against Adelaide.

Stores replenished, and lockers stuffed with didgeridoos and boomerangs, the Volans 07 deployment continued with a rough crossing to Wellington.

Berthed in the heart of the New Zealand capital, Monmouth was a big attraction, drawing more than 2,200 visitors in four hours.

As the first ship under the White Ensign to visit New Zealand in seven years, there was another busy schedule of duties and official calls, but the ship's company made the most of their respite in this beautiful country, taking scenic tours and visiting vineyards while other, hardier souls took their chances in a land where sport is taken very seriously.



● *HMS Monmouth encounters 'roughers' en route to New Zealand*

Six entered the Auckland half-marathon, while others went white-water rafting, bungee jumping, kayaking and mountain biking.

One group even made it to Christchurch, on the South Island, to see the All Blacks defeat the Springboks.



● *The Osprey Trophy presented to 218 Flight, 815 NAS*

Picture: LA(Phot) 'Billy' Bunting

815's 218 bag 23

THE drugbusters of RFA Wave Ruler's dedicated helicopter flight have earned the inaugural Osprey Trophy presented in honour of their fallen comrades.

Lts Dave Cole, Rob Dunn and Jamie Mitchell and LAEM Richard Darnell were killed when HMS Portland's Lynx crashed into the Channel off Lizard Point during a night-time search and rescue mission in December 2004.

To keep their memories alive, fellow Lynx fliers have set up the Osprey Trophy which will be presented each year to the Lynx flight whose men and women contribute the most to the ethos, reputation and standing of the helicopter force.

There could be no more worthy winners of that first trophy – a magnificent sculpture of an osprey – than 218 Flight of 815 Naval Air Squadron.

The formation joined tanker Wave Ruler in the Caribbean on anti-drug trafficking swoops – and immediately made its mark.

Thanks to its efforts, 23 suspected drug runners were arrested, three boats were seized, one was blown up, and £1.1bn of cocaine never made it to the streets of North America or Europe.

Perhaps less well known is the flight's work with police forces in the Caribbean. The 218 team contacted authorities in countries and islands Wave Ruler was due to visit, offering the services of the Fleet Air Arm.

Numerous police forces took 218 up on the offer. Once in the air, the police-218 combination spotted 34 cannabis plantations and almost 68 illegal drug 'settlements', all of which were subsequently destroyed.

SHIPS OF THE FALKLANDS CONFLICT

Replica models cast in metal, hand painted and mounted on a wooden plinth with brass name plate.

Ships in 1.1250th scale

HMS HERMES (7.5" long) £55.00. ***HMS INVINCIBLE*** (6.5" long) £55.00
HMS FEARLESS (5" long) £45.00. ***RFA GREEN ROVER*** (6.5" long) £45.00
RFA OLWEN (6.5 " long) £45.00. ***RFA RESOURCE*** (6.5 " long) £45.00
RFA FORT GRANGE (6.00" long) £45.00. ***RFA BAYLEAF*** (5.25" long) £45.00

Ships in 1.700th scale

HMS ARDENT **Type 21** (6.5" long) £55.00
HMS SHEFFIELD **Type 42** (7.00" long) £55.00
HMS INVINCIBLE (12.00" long) £120.00

Post and Packing add £6.00 (Models sent via UPS)

To order your model send your name, address and daytime telephone number, along with your cheque or credit card details to:

Skytrex Ltd, Unit 1 Charnwood Business Park, North Road, Loughborough, Leicestershire LE11 1LE

Tel: 01509 213789 Fax: 01509 230874

email: sales@skytrex.com www.skytrex.com

PLEASE ALLOW UP TO 28 DAYS FOR DELIVERY



● *A Royal Marine looks out from a Viking vehicle*

A sea of

THE return of 3 Commando Brigade from Afghanistan in the spring brought the curtain down on the RN's involvement in peacekeeping duties in Afghanistan for the time being, right?

Wrong, as Lt Hugh Blethyn of Task Force Helmand explains...

AFGHANISTAN, a landlocked and mountainous country in the heart of Asia.

The nearest sea is 400 miles away – hardly the environment in which you would expect to find sailors and marines...

But the men and women of the Senior Service remain key to the success of British operations here.

A total of 75 RN and 150 RM personnel are employed across Afghanistan: Viking armoured vehicle crews, Joint Force Harrier personnel, medics, advisers, staff officers.

When the rest of the brigade returned to Blighty, the Royal Marines' Vikings remained in theatre – such was the success of the new armoured vehicle on its first deployment.

Around 60 commandos, assisted by soldiers in Helmand, form two Armoured Support Troops, capable of deploying a company group of marines or infantry into battle – and supporting them with firepower and the ability to move rapidly – and protected – around the battlefield.

The success of the Viking vehicles during their first deployment to Afghanistan – they've been a constant presence in Helmand since last September, almost making them eligible for permanent residence here, their crews joke – has greatly improved the troop's mobility around the rugged terrain.

No other vehicles are able to cope as well with the demanding terrain of soft sand in the desert; Vikings are regularly given the role of protecting re-supply convoys, recovering bogged-vehicles (including vehicles trying to recover other bogged-down vehicles) as they hit soft sand.

More recently, Viking has resumed a more traditional and suited role of offering flank protection to dismounted troops, mobility to fire support elements and direct fire support when needed.

No.1 Armoured Support Troop, led by Capt Graham Watson RM, have been at the heart of actions against the Taleban with Battle Group South.

Codenamed Operation Bataka (the Pashtu word for 'duck'), the Royals were vital in a two-pronged mission around the southern Helmand centre of Garmsir.

The Vikings carried troops to a forward base, then remained on hand to evacuate any casualties as well as ferrying vital supplies around.

They were also called upon to safeguard a temporary landing site for helicopters supporting Bataka. The operation was somewhat of a landmark for the Royal Engineers, with the first assault bridge being built under combat conditons since operations in Malaya in the 1950s.

The bridge, capable of supporting Vikings, now provides troops with the ability to rapidly strike at Taliban forces that have been attacking the town of Garmsir.

The second phase of Bataka took immediate advantage of the new crossing, with troops thrusting into areas previously held by the Taleban.

The enemy was encountered and destroyed by soldiers from the Grenadier Guards, slowly increasing the influence of and control by the Afghan government in Garmsir.

In northern Helmand, No.2 Armoured Support Troop has been heavily in demand, notably on Operation Ghartse Ghar (Mountain Stag) to the north of the district centre of Sangin.

Vikings had already been used on the previous mission in the region – Lastay Kulang (Pickaxe Handle) – to drive Taleban fighters out of the Upper Sangin valley.

Ghartse Ghar saw the Vikings pushing troops forward into the battle, then providing protection and swift mobility to evacuate casualties out of the danger zone.

Moving ammunition and water forward to the troops engaged in combat, the Vikings then stood back to employ the full range and high rate of fire of their guns offering direct fire support and flank protection where needed.

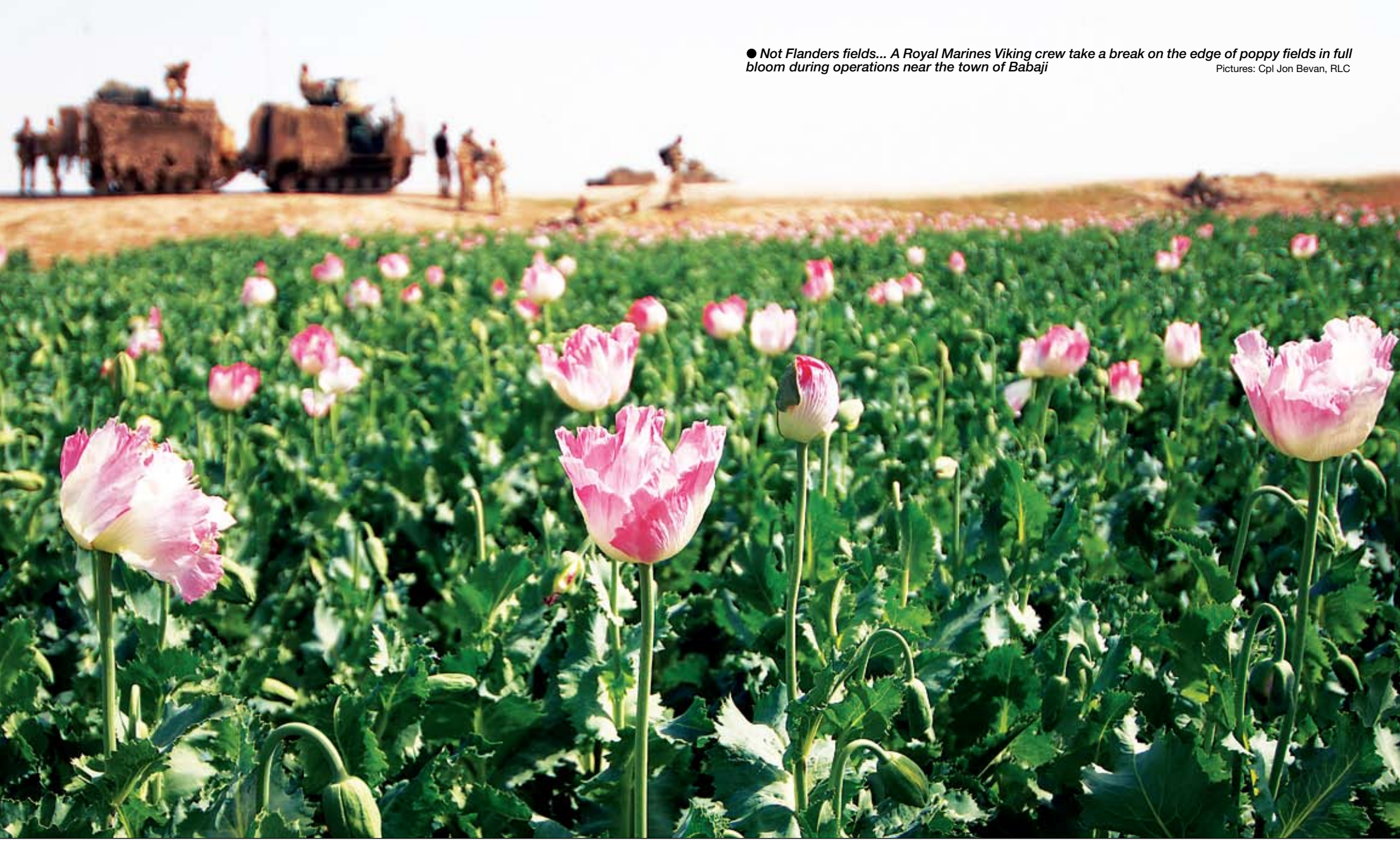
War, or rather defeating the Taleban fundamentalists and other insurgents, is only one strand of the British mission in Afghanistan.

Key to the success of operations – and the long-term rebirth of Afghanistan – is support for the populace, which is where the CIMIC (CIvilian-MIlitary-Co-operation) team comes in.

Against the backdrop of the daily threat of improvised explosive devices, suicide bombers, mortars and small arms attacks, the CIMIC team in Helmand, which includes three RN lieutenants, attempts to improve the lot of the Afghan people.

"Operating in Helmand is never dull – no one day is quite the same as another" said Lt Jamie Walker, one of the Joint CIMIC Group's staff officers.

"One day you're drinking *chai* (tea) with an Afghan minister,



● *Not Flanders fields... A Royal Marines Viking crew take a break on the edge of poppy fields in full bloom during operations near the town of Babaji*
Pictures: Cpl Jon Bevan, RLC

sand and poppies

the next you're being inserted into enemy territory as part of a helicopter airborne assault..."

Lt Walker, who has also conducted CIMIC duties in Iraq, survived a radio-controlled roadside bomb attack in which one soldier died and a number of others suffered grave injuries.

"It's at times like that when it doesn't matter what service, cap badge or rank you are, everyone gets stuck in, teamwork is vital."

Reservist Lt Rebecca Parnell, a former warfare officer, was on her way to visit a school one day when the patrol came under rocket-propelled grenade and small arms fire from Taleban forces in Lashkar Gar.

"Luckily, no one was hurt on that occasion except the Taleban fighters who came off much worse," said Lt Parnell.

"It's not a pretty picture with the continuous battles, explosive devices and suicide bombings, but against all the odds and with fresh enthusiasm there has been progress and we are getting there – we have established excellent relationships with many of the key players in Helmand and are helping them to make improvements to the daily lives of ordinary Afghan people."

One of the CIMIC team's main efforts is the liaison between the military and other areas of government such as the Department for International Development and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

"Progress may be frustratingly slow at times," explained medical liaison officer Lt Rachael Morgan.

"Things we take for granted in the UK take much longer here since the local government is in its infancy.

"Afghanistan has some of the world's worst health indicators – the average life expectancy is just 46 years, more than 15 years lower than in neighbouring countries.

"One child in four does not survive beyond its fifth birthday and a large majority of women, particularly in rural areas, are never seen by a health professional during their pregnancy and childbirth.

"Many health problems are caused by unsafe drinking water and poor sanitation."

While the sailors of CIMIC engage with the population, two RN warrant officers are helping the government of Afghanistan to promote governance and social development.

WOs Scott Harvey and Stephen Price are advisors to the British Provincial Development Committee in the Helmand capital of Lashkar Gah.

Having been impressed by the many improvements in recent months, WO Price – a weapons engineer – said that the most rewarding aspect of his deployment was "working with a different culture, where most of the local people are more than happy for you to help them in whatever form."

He continued: "Pretty soon you start to build up a network of Afghan contacts that become friends."

WO Harvey added: "As matelots, it is unusual to work on the land – and especially in a land-locked country.

"Despite the challenges faced, the deployment has been first class and a great opportunity to work alongside firstly the Royal Marines and now the Army."

Deep in the desert at Task Force Helmand's main base of Camp Bastion, RN medics handle a variety of casualties – including British and Coalition soldiers, Afghan National Army and Police.

Among the medics is CPO(MT) Shaun Rick, playing a crucial role as a diagnostic radiographer.



Usually based at the Ministry of Defence Hospital Unit in Portsmouth, CPO Rick is responsible for the state-of-the-art mobile X-Ray equipment.

"The highlight of the tour is being part of the medical team that delivers casualties from the battlefield to the theatre within the 'golden hour' – critical for patient survival in extreme cases," he said.

The past three months have thrown up many obstacles, one of which is the sobering reality of dealing with every Task Force Helmand casualty and fatality.

"Despite being housed in tents in the middle of the desert, the cutting-edge equipment and work of the Joint Medical team demonstrates how the future of medicine in the Armed Forces is shaping up."

As a proud matelot, CPO Rick has been raising the profile of the Royal Navy by naming the Radiographic Department HMS X-Ray and organising alcohol-free 'sundowners'.

In neighbouring Kandahar province, 18 sailors and four Royal Marine Commandos are deployed at the sprawling Kandahar Air Base.

The transfer of authority from the Dutch to the British in May heralded the arrival of a British Staff which directs operations across six southern provinces: Kandahar, Uruzgan, Daykondi, Zabul, Nimruz and Helmand.

Away from the south, in the heart of Afghanistan's capital city of Kabul, the Senior Service performs a vital role in pretty much the last place you'd expect to find members of the UK Amphibious Maritime Force.

Eight amphibious experts are attached to the 1,000-strong headquarters staff of the International Security Assistance Force, which leads the peacekeeping mission in Afghanistan.

Across Kabul at the British Embassy, Cdre Steve Jermyn leads the military staff as the Strategic Director of the British Government's Strategy Unit, ensuring that the contribution of this country's armed forces is in line with the input of other peacekeeping forces and Afghanistan's government.

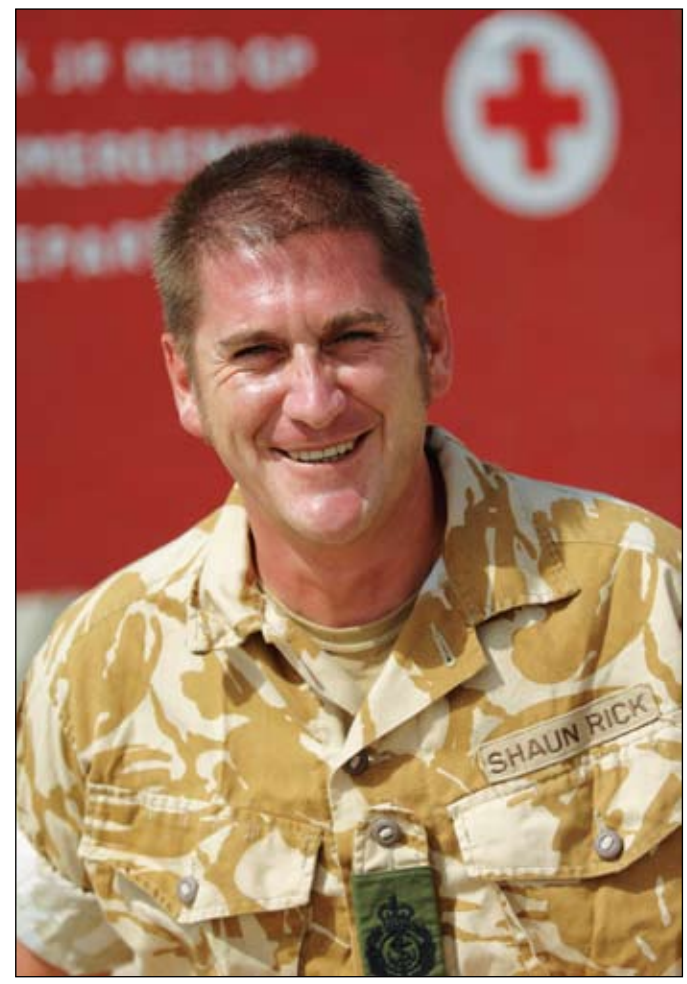
And where there are British forces and Taleban attacks, there is media interest.

There is a sizeable media team in Afghanistan to meet the demands not just of the British and international press corps, but also the growing number of local reporting teams.

The development of the Afghan media – and the military's engagement with them – has to be one of the success stories in Helmand, allowing Afghans to tell the story of progress themselves – often at significant personal danger of intimidation from the Taleban.

Spreading the word is not left solely to the media.

There is also an Information Operation, whose number includes Lt Alex Savage, which engages with tribal leaders and locals.



The personal touch is crucial. Four out of five Afghans cannot read or write, so word of mouth and radio are the key means of communication.

"This war will not be won by bombs and bullets alone, but by winning the hearts and minds of the locals," said Lt Savage.

And as for the 224 of his RN colleagues, they won't be lonely for much longer.

Defence Secretary Des Browne has ordered an extra Viking troop to deploy to Helmand and, as part of the roulement of British forces in theatre, arriving in Afghanistan from late next month will be the Sea Kings of 846 NAS, the Harriers of the Naval Strike Wing, and the green berets of 40 Commando.

● *An 847 NAS Lynx hovers as smoke billows across Yeovilton during the commando assault finale*

Pictures: AB(MW) Jay Allen and AB(CS) 'Del' Trotter (DSOP)

A grand day out

ORDINARILY the sight of a RIB billowing orange smoke on the back of a low loader as it crept along the runway at Yeovilton would raise a few eyebrows.

Today, it seemed perfectly normal.

This was, the commentators of Yeovilton Air Day proudly proclaimed over the loudspeaker, "the first day of summer in Somerset – we ordered this weather from the Met Office."

Perhaps they did, and 30,000 people are glad they did, for the Somerset air base was bathed in sunshine for the annual public showcase of the Fleet Air Arm.

"Look around you," the commentators urged. "This is the Royal Navy. All the helicopters are grey." (Not quite all... Endurance's distinctive red and grey Lynx was also in attendance.)

And not all the aircraft on display are British, too.

Air Day opened with a bang – or rather a roar – with a Belgian F16 deafening the crowd as it performed some astonishing manoeuvres which drew a round of applause (or possibly it was the commentary which gained the crowd's approbation...).

After power came grace, courtesy of the sleek lines of a venerable Seafire and Sea Fury, and the chunkier Douglas Skyraider, reminders of the wartime and early post-war days of the Fleet Air Arm.

Air Day is an occasion where you need eyes in the back of your head.

While aircraft spin, dive and pirouette over the airfield or roar low over the runway, on the standings there's the throaty sound of a Sea Fury warming up while Jet Rangers buzz about carrying guests and Merlins and Chinooks fly around in holding patterns ready for their chance to take centre stage.

On the ground the Royal Marines throw themselves around in unarmed combat displays and in a nearby arena Heron's field gun crew hauled the weapon over the tarmac. (Watch out, too, for sailors wandering around with huge Scooby Doos on their backs, prizes from the various stalls at the funfair.)

And when the skies are almost empty (roughly half an hour in the middle of the day), cars hurtle down the runway in a race with a Lynx.

Exactly who won proved debatable; the finishing line was out of sight from the commentary box, but the Lynx did a wing over at the end of each run to celebrate victory over the touring cars.

The Formula 2000 racer of the RN's Lt John Welsh, making its first outing of the year, proved a stiffer opponent.

But on two runs down the Yeovilton tarmac honours were even – proving just how fast Lynx at full pelt is (you only truly grasp the speed of the helicopter when the car is tearing down the runway a few feet below it).

Although this is a day celebrating naval aviation, the RAF do muscle in on the act.

The Eurofighter Typhoon is by far the loudest showman at Air Day (so loud that you have to shout to your colleagues a good half-mile away from the jet), while the Red Arrows (or as one youngster enthused: "Yay, it's the Red Dragons...") and Battle of Britain Memorial Flight always stir the right emotions.

They were all upstaged, however, by the Swiss Air Force display team Patrouille Suisse who, in the words of Rear Admiral Terry Loughran, Chairman of Fly Navy Heritage, "painted a huge heart in the sky and everyone fell in love with them".

As the heart dispersed in the Somerset sky, peaceful intentions gave way to conflict.

For Air Day, as ever, closed with the traditional crowdpleaser: the 45-minute Commando Helicopter Assault – an assault not just on the invaders of a friendly nation, but on the senses.

There is perhaps no better demonstration of the modern symphony of battle than the finale to air day: Harriers roar overhead unleashing 500lb bombs, Royal Marines rapid roping out of Sea Kings, Lynx pouncing on that RIB (well, you can't drive a boat through the Somerset soil), smoke from a 105mm field gun rolling over the lush grass, BVs and Land Rovers scurrying over the turf rather like the *Magic Roundabout*'s Dougal.

And, as is customary at the end of a bravura performance, the principals took their bow, lined up for the appreciative crowd. As they did a wall of flame rolled along the runway behind them.

And so as it had begun, so Air Day ended with a bang.

● *A Belgian F16 trails smoke during the spectacular curtain-raiser to air day*

Admiral needs tomb aiders

RESIDENTS of a small town in County Down are hoping to commemorate one of Nelson's 'band of brothers' – and one of Ireland's finest sailors.

Henry Blackwood, who was born in Killyleagh in 1770, was just 35 when he led the frigate force, headed by his own HMS Euryalus, into battle with the French at Trafalgar.

Blackwood's career after 1805 was equally distinguished; he rose to eventually become Vice Admiral Sir Henry Blackwood.

He was buried in St John's Parish Church, Killyleagh, in 1832 – the only Trafalgar captain interred in Ireland.

Now his tomb urgently needs restoration. The community group Killyleagh Social Partnership is hoping to honour Blackwood and all the Irishmen who fought at Trafalgar.

John Huddleston, secretary of the Killyleagh Social Partnership, explained: "Blackwood was a famous sea captain, and although his naval exploits were honoured in his day, we're in danger of forgetting them as time goes on."

He added: "We want to raise a statue to Blackwood and all the many Irish sailors who fought at Trafalgar, to make sure they are all remembered as they should be."

The plan is to excavate Blackwood's impressive tomb, which is over six feet high but currently covered in earth to protect it, and to erect a statue by the town harbour inscribed with all the names of his fellow Irish sailors.

The admiral's hometown, population about 2,500, was the focal point for the Trafalgar 200 celebrations in 2005, and Killyleagh Castle was the site of the Northern Ireland Beacon lit by the Earl of Wessex.

For further information, or to send a donation, the contact is John Huddleston, Killyleagh Social Partnership, 4 Strangford Avenue, Killyleagh, BT30 9UJ or e-mail john.h64@ukonline.co.uk



● *The Volunteer Band of RNAS Culdrose leads a march by air station personnel through the streets of nearby Helston to celebrate the establishment's 60th birthday.*

As the sailors and aircrew marched along Coinagehall Street they were honoured with a flypast by Culdrose-based helicopters and aircraft, while Helston Mayor Cllr Ronnie Williams and air station Commanding Officer Capt Philip Thicknesse took the salute.

The people of Helston initially opposed the Admiralty's plans to set up an airfield outside their town.

But within a dozen years they had bestowed the freedom of the market town upon the airbase.

And six decades on from its commissioning, Culdrose remains the biggest employer in the area.

As part of the diamond anniversary events at Culdrose itself, air base personnel paraded in front of Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Adrian Johns – also Rear Admiral Fleet Air Arm – who praised their professionalism, but he added that there was no guarantee the air station would be around in six decade's time to celebrate its 120th birthday.

Ceremonial divisions were followed by a drumhead service honouring Culdrose airmen who have given their lives for their country over the past 60 years.

Such sacrifices have not been in vain; Culdrose-based search and rescue teams alone have flown more than 7,000 missions during their time at the Cornish air base.

Picture: LA(Phot) Carl Osmond, RNAS Culdrose

The camera never lies...

NAVAL police north of the border are following the lead of their English brethren by donning miniature 'head cams' to record their patrols around Faslane, Helensburgh, Dumbarton.

RN Police in Devonport and a growing number of civilian forces as well as customs officers are using the cameras to gather evidence, downloaded on to a computer system after a patrol.

The cameras – worn on the side of the head just above an ear – are only switched on by naval officers once an incident begins – and the footage cannot be tampered with. It is also deleted after 31 days if no action is taken.

"This is the way forward for 21st-Century policing," said Lt Mark May, Naval Provost Marshal (Northern).

"It protects everyone involved, unless you have committed a criminal act, in which case it provides irrefutable evidence."

Liverpool to the rescue

DESTROYER HMS Liverpool broke off from weapons trials off Portland to rescue a stranded motor boat.

The engines of the Blue Rose, with four people aboard, packed up 25 miles south-west of Portland Bill.

Liverpool dispatched her sea boat and four sailors, including two engineers to fix the engine – which they did since Blue Rose returned to Weymouth at 35kts for permanent repairs, while Hawk jets roared overhead as Liverpool resumed air defence exercises.

Back to the beaches

THE hallowed sands and bocage of Normandy were the destination for more than two dozen reservists on a D-Day pilgrimage.

Part-time sailors from Ceres Division, the Leeds-based subordinate unit of HMS Sherwood, joined their Nottingham comrades, plus counterparts from Eaglet, Calliope, Flying Fox and Officer Training Corps cadets from Leeds University on a weekend's tour of the invasion beaches and environs.

Barely had the ferry from Portsmouth docked in Ouistreham than the 29-strong party was ashore and enjoying breakfast in the Pegasus Bridge café.

The neighbouring bridge was the first Allied success of June 6 1944, seized by British paratroopers in the small hours of that fateful Tuesday (the bridge itself no longer spans the Caen canal, but forms the centrepiece of a museum).

Suitably satiated and immersed in Normandy history, the battlefield tourists drove along the Calvados shore to Arromanches, site of Gold Beach in 1944 and today still the resting place of remnants of the Mulberry harbours which served the invading forces so well six decades ago.

Sunday began with all the party dressed in their finest at the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery on the edge of Bayeux – the final resting place of 4,648 servicemen – where a wreath was laid and prayers were said in honour of the fallen. Few places better capture the sacrifices made by the men of 1944, not least thanks to the inscription: *Nos a Gulielmo victi victoris patriam liberavimus* – we, once conquered by William, have set free the conqueror's fatherland.

From Bayeux it was a short coach ride to the foot of the Cotentin peninsula and the village of St Mère Église, scene of an American parachute drop on D-Day – and where a paratrooper was caught on the church spire and dangled precariously from it while his comrades secured the heart of the village.

Today, in his honour, a dummy is suspended from the church – although, as a café owner explained to the Brits, the dummy hangs from the wrong side of the tower… so tourists can take a better photograph of him.

A stone's throw from St Mère Église lies Utah Beach, the next port of call for the reservists, then it was across the Vire estuary to Pointe du Hoc – where US Rangers stormed the cliffs only to find the gun emplacements at the top empty.

The (non-existent) guns of Pointe du Hoc were intended to defend the approaches to Omaha Beach, four miles to the east.

The American assault at 'Bloody Omaha' has been immortalised on celluloid in *The Longest Day* and, most vividly, in *Saving Private Ryan*, but for the sailors, the scale of the sacrifice truly hit home at the sprawling American military cemetery in Colleville-sur-Mer, which overlooks Omaha.

"Only at this moment did the price that the Americans paid in blood on D-Day start to really sink in," said Ceres Division's AB Andy Mitchell.

His colleague AB Shuttleworth agreed. "To visit Normandy is possibly the only way to take in the enormity of what was achieved over sixty years ago.

"I must admit there were occasions when I was lost for words. The emotional highs and lows of the weekend will, I'm sure, fade. But the memories will never leave any of us."

■ THE ship's company of minehunter HMS Quorn plan to hold a commemorative service in France in October to honour their forebears.

The previous Quorn was sunk off Normandy in August 1944 during a night-time assault by German E-boats, motorboats crammed with explosives, and human torpedoes.

The attack claimed the lives of 130 of Quorn's complement, many of whom were buried ashore.

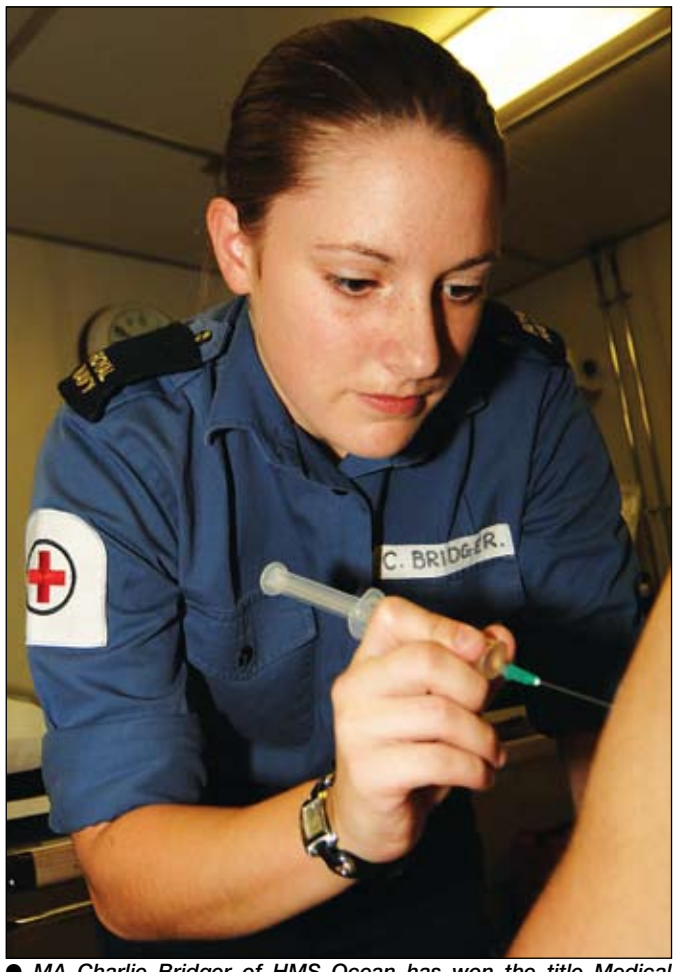
It is at their graves in Normandy that today's men of Quorn intend to pay their respects, on Trafalgar Day or October 22.

There is no Quorn association, but survivors of the 1944 Quorn or their relatives are invited to join the present-day sailors for the ceremony in France. They should contact Lt Cdr Stephen Walton, Executive Officer, HMS Quorn, BFPO 366.





PEOPLE



● *MA Charlie Bridger of HMS Ocean has won the title Medical Assistant of the Year 2006-07* Picture: LA(Phot) Ray Jones

A bright Charlie

ON board HMS Ocean in the Caribbean MA Charlie Bridger was celebrating the title of Medical Assistant of the Year 2006-07, a title she won over 600 other Medical Assistants across all three of the Armed Forces.

Charlie came top of her class during training, then excelled on board her first ship, HMS Ocean, receiving a write-up from her boss CPOMA Tanja Darkin that propelled her to the top of the list of new-entry MAs.

Charlie admits that when she first arrived on board ship her messmates didn't even know what she looked like for the first two weeks as she was so busy getting to grips with the massive sickbay at the heart of the air assault carrier.

CPOMA Darkin, practice manager on board the assault ship, said: "She has earnt it. We're really proud of her."

Naturally the news of her top position was delivered to Charlie with the usual medical humour.

The young rating was called in by her Chief to be told that she had to attend the Medical Director General (Naval Symposium) at the Institute of Naval Medicine in Gosport in July.

As the symposium followed soon after the warship's return to home port after her four-month deployment, it was understandable that the medic was a little disappointed that her homecoming plans might be disrupted.

But appeals to her boss' lenient nature fell on stony ground with the reply: "Well, if you don't come, how are you going to pick up your Medical Assistant of the Year award?"

"I was shocked," said Charlie, who admitted that she had not expected to win the award.

CPO Darkin laughed: "We're so chuffed for her. Not everybody wins an award like that."

The four medics on board the massive carrier are a close-knit crew, all newcomers to Ocean's company for this deployment, and coping with a list of ailments that have ranged from sniffles to life-threatening injuries during their four months in the Caribbean.

Although it does seem that it's the sporting activities generated along the ship's island-hopping that has created a hefty proportion of the injuries that have filled their days.

The assault ship boasts two wards offering 14 beds, and an operating theatre in an impressive medical centre.

The tight-knit community on board Team Ocean are a real boon to the medics.

"When there's an emergency, you can always rely on the ship's company, and particularly 9 Assault Squadron RM – they are always there to help," said CPO Darkin.

"And the Royal Marines know their stuff. The lads on here, I think they're excellent. They're always there for you."

And they call it puppy love

THEY might look tough, but even the Royal Marines can be melted by a pair of big brown eyes...

The green berets of 42 Commando on patrol in Afghanistan took into their care the stray dogs of Nowzad in Helmand Province.

Led by Sgt Paul 'Penny' Farthing, a few like-minded dog-owning commandos took to caring for the waifs and strays of the canine world.

When it was time for the Royal Marines to pull out of the region, it was decided that leaving the dogs was not an option.

So back in the UK Sgt Farthing's wife, Lisa – a POPT at HMS Raleigh – tracked down an animal rescue centre in Kabul run by London-based charity Mayhew Animal Home.

A two-day car trip was arranged for the five adult dogs and numerous unexpected puppies – however escapees and illness meant that only three dogs and two puppies arrived safely at their Kabul base.

However in early July two of the dogs – Nowzad and Tali – arrived in the UK to begin their quarantine period before takiong up residence in their new home – the house of Sgt Penny Farthing and wife Lisa.

The couple set up a charity Nowzad Dogs to make it all possible – www.nowzaddogs.co.uk.

Sgt Farthing said: "The reason we set up the charity in the first place was that we couldn't just walk away and ignore them.

"We will be able to help fund animal shelters in Afghanistan and help educate local people on animal welfare.

"I can't wait to get Nowzad and Tali home to meet my other two dogs."



● *Sgt 'Penny' Farthing and Tali, the Nowzad rescue dog*

■ GUARDS from the Military Provost Guard Service at Bickleigh Barracks in Plymouth have acquired some feather friends after a Pied Wagtail set up nest in one of their patrol vehicles.

The guards promptly laid up their vehicle and under instruction from DEFRA, they wait for the baby birds to fly the nest...

Dislocation of expectation

SOLDIERS from C Company, Second Battalion, the Parachute Regiment were quite literally shown the ropes when they spent two days with the Royal Marine experts in mountain warfare, the RM Commando Mountain Leaders.

Day one featured the delights of vertical cliff assaults, introducing a whole raft of new skills to soldiers more used to dropping in than scaling up.

Day two acquainted the Paras with the new phrase 'dislocation of expectation' – or always expect the unexpected.

Survival behind enemy lines was the theme of this day, building shelters, trapping animals and starting fires.

Sgt Phil Stout, a Platoon Sergeant with Second Battalion, said: "This training has really opened the eyes of the young soldiers and has affirmed our links with the Royal Marines.

"If you need an answer, ask an expert – and the Mountain Leaders are most definitely that."

WO2 Dave Fradley RM from the Commando Training Centre at Lympstone said: "A mutual respect exists, and as Britain's only theatre-entry troops it's good to pass on skills and draw on each other's experience."



● *Sgt Peter Curly RM 'encourages' a soldier from 2 Para*

Spud's bravery

THE bravery of LS Stephen 'Spud' Murphy has been recognised with a Commander-in-Chief Fleet commendation.

Spud saved the lives of two Iraqi marines and a civilian worker when a fire broke out on an oil terminal last year. The British sailor was on board the US ship Ogden when the explosion blasted through the KAAOT oil platform.

Spud commandeered an Iraqi Fast Aluminium Boat and its crew and began searching for survivors.

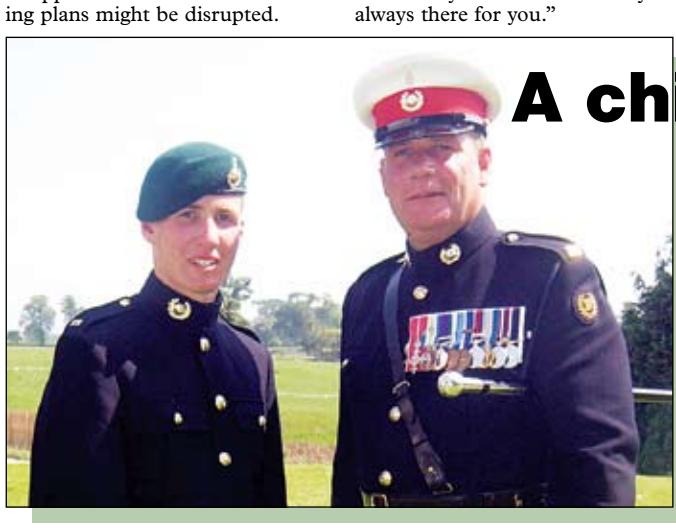
He pulled the three men from the water, then went back to the burning platform to evacuate the other marines and workers from the site.

Spud has already been recognised with an award from the Iraqi Navy.

Spud added: "It's a real honour to receive a commendation and I'm pleased that by being out there we are helping to train the Iraqi Navy to react in similar situations.

"The two Iraqi marines came down to our base in Umm Qasr every couple of weeks afterwards to thank me.

"They brought their parents and said that I am now an honorary member of their families."



A chip off the old block

IT IS stressful enough for many new recruits as their passing-out parade forms up at the Commando Training Centre Lympstone – let alone when your dad is the Regimental Sergeant Major in charge of the event.

Royal Marine Jack Botham, aged 17, has now passed for duty with 930 Troop the King's Squad. And never was a young Royal Marine under such intense scrutiny from the assembled audience – and to his credit, Jack did not put a foot or rifle wrong.

WO1 (RSM) 'Both' Botham said: "I was immensely proud to be part of my son's pass-out parade."

It is believed to be the first occasion that the serving Regimental Sergeant Major at the CTCRM has officiated on the same parade that his son passed for duty.

Jack is now serving with Zulu Company, 45 Commando Royal Marines in Arbroath, Scotland.

● *Royal Marine Jack Botham and father Regimental Sergeant Major WO1 'Both' Botham*

news in brief

■ **AFTER 61 years since leaving the Royal Navy, World War 2 veteran Tom Neill returned to sea on board the Navy's patrol craft HMS Smiter in the Gareloch.**

Now aged 86, the retired lieutenant commanded a Motor Torpedo Boat, and won the Distinguished Service Cross in 1942 for his actions against a German *Möwe*-class torpedo boat.

Tom spent the day with the Glasgow and Strathclyde universities' URNU boat, which brought back many memories.

He said: "Although things today are very different, there is no greater feeling than being at the helm of your own ship. I'd like to thank the Royal Navy and the crew of HMS Smiter for the opportunity to come to sea once again."

■ LIFEGUARD 994 paid a call on aircraft carrier HMS Illustrious during the early summer's Noble Mariner NATO exercise.

Lifeguard 994 is in fact a S76 helicopter of the Swedish Coastguard Search and Rescue force, captained by Cdr Paul Carbonnier who head up the rescue organisation for the Swedish south coast.

■ **CHILDREN at Birches Green Infant School near Birmingham – despite being landlocked – have a strong affinity with the Royal Navy after their new playground with a wooden ship was officially opened by Logs Maria Carter and CPO Douglas of the Birmingham Armed Forces Careers Office.**

The school had been teaching the children all about ships, sailors, and Naval life and terms – so when the sailors arrived they were greeted with a barrage of questions all about where they had visited and Naval traditions.

Maria said: "We think that maybe a few ideas were planted for future sailors."

■ CELEBRATIONS took place in HMS Nelson's wardroom for Lt Don Cantellow, who enjoyed his 100th birthday amid the fineries of the officers' mess.

Don was a Boreman Boy entrant at the Royal Hospital School during World War 1, and joined the RN as an Artificer Apprentice in 1923.

World War 2 saw Don in action off Norway and on Arctic convoy duty before being torpedoed off Malta in 1944, whereupon he saw out the rest of the war with Dauntless being repaired in Philadelphia.

■ **LLOGS Jason Lee has been appointed the first Junior Ratings' mess president on board the first of the Navy's new D-class destroyers, HMS Daring.**

Jason is the first Junior Rates mess president in the Fleet, a management structure along similar lines to Senior Rates – a change which has been brought in to reflect the difference in messes on board the Type 45s where junior rates will be accommodated in six-berth cabins with a communal recreation space.

■ ONE of the Navy's Merlin helicopters showed off its prowess to engineering students at Ulster University.

Dr Richard Dean, Dean of the Faculty of Engineering, said: "The visit by the Royal Navy and their latest Merlin aircraft is a fantastic opportunity for our students to see at first hand some of the most sophisticated technology in the world.

"This is a unique opportunity to see cutting-edge technology in areas of engineering such as computing, technology, electrical, electronic and mechanical engineering.

"Engineering offers young graduates the chance to be involved in improving and changing the world they live in and offers a variety of activities seldom matched in other careers."

news in brief

Brothers in arms

THREE days before he joined his first ship HMS Ocean ETME Gavin Hitchcock got a phone call from the ship saying "Bring your boots."

In fact, even before joining the ship the baby stoker had been volunteered to play Prop in a rugby match against a team of Barbados International players...

And signed up for the dirty job of repairing the diesel engines on board the massive air assault carrier...

All at the hand of his older brother POMEM 'Taff' Hicks, a 'tankie' of 17 years experience in the Royal Navy.

But it was also due to older brother Taff that Gavin decided to sign up for the Naval service after years of working as a production engineer near their hometown in Wales.

His tales of adventure on the high seas were what lured younger brother Gavin into the service and away from the same old four-walls of his workshop in Wales.

Gavin resisted the siren call of the sea longer than their youngest brother 'Alfie', another ETME on board frigate HMS Argyll, who joined up in dark blue three years before.

"I knew what sort of life my brother was having, what he was doing, where he was going," said Gavin.

"I knew it was going to be hard work, but it's not with every job that you can go to Barbados.

"Even Norway seems appealing. It's not one of the usual places you get to see."

It seems that the branch choice was made for them before either younger brother signed up on the dotted line.

"I told 'em you're not joining as anything else," said Taff. "This is the branch to be in. It's the hardest working. We have a very strong work hard, play hard mentality."

"We have got one more brother," said Taff. "Our oldest brother works for the Inland Revenue – so we shun him."

Little brother Gavin, who actually isn't so little hence his rugby-playing position, specifically chose HMS Ocean because of his brother, but admits he has a few qualms about working with him.

"I'd like to be in his section," said Gavin, "but then I know what he'd be like as well."

Older brother Taff roars with laughter, then nods in full agreement with his brother's prediction.



● *Little bro' ETME Gavin Hitchcock and big bro' POMEM 'Taff' Hicks of HMS Ocean*
Picture: LA(Phot) Ray Jones

Since the age of ten Gavin has been enjoying a taste of life at sea on Families' Days with his older brother.

Taff added: "It's strange because when you look back to a year and a half ago we never thought we'd be having a drink together in Tortola.

"It took a few weeks to get used to – every time you walked into the flat you'd see your brother and I was used to him being home all the time. It's quite strange.

"You get used to it after a bit. He just blends into one of the lads now, one of the ETs."

This is Taff's second time on HMS Ocean; he wanted to come back on board. "You get lots of hands on stuff here. There's never a dull moment."

How come little brother Alfie is on Argyll? "I wasn't on a ship at a time when he joined a ship, I was shoreside," explained Taff.

But Gavin added: "Although he has said as his next draft he wants Ocean."

TWO BROTHERS paraded together in Southampton to mark the Falklands 25 anniversary when Cpl Sam Hairsine of the Band of the Royal Marines, Portsmouth, joined with his brother Lt Will Hairsine of HMS York.

However these two brothers have paraded before on numerous occasion – although at the time brother Will was also a musician with the Royal Marines Band Service before transferring to the 'dark side' as a commissioned Warfare Officer.

But this was the first time on parade together since the brothers' military careers had diverged – and on this occasion Will was commanding the parade.

Will said: "We were in Southampton to support and remember our comrades who made the difference in the Falklands Conflict 25 years ago, some who still serve in a maritime profession.

"It was a fantastic day for a parade and it was made all the more special for Sam and I to be stepping off together again.

"It rounded off an excellent weekend perfectly.

"As you can imagine, I'm one of the rare breed of matelots that enjoys a good march!"

● *Cpl Sam Hairsine of the RM Band Service and Lt Will Hairsine of HMS York*





● *Lt Cdr Charmian Leaver, Chief Meteorologist in Kandahar*

A bolt out of the blue

SOUTHERN Afghanistan has a bit of a reputation for heat and dust, with normal June conditions of over 40°C and no rainfall.

So it came as a bit of a surprise when 1½ inches of rain fell in just two days.

Lt Cdr Charmian Leaver, the Chief Meteorologist for the coalition forces in Kandahar, said: "We meteorologists normally have a pretty good idea of the sort of weather to expect but nothing like this has ever been reported here before.

"It was the result of a tropical cyclone that started off in the Arabian Sea, crossed onto the land and kept going. It brought a lot of cloud, thundery activity and rain.

"It was highly unusual to say the least and there has been nothing like it in living memory."



X marks the diver

DIVERS from Southern Diving Unit 2 at Horsea Island took part in the Eastbourne 999 Emergency Services Display, showing offf their diving skills in an 18,000 litre display tank... and playing noughts and crosses.

The event, which is the largest held on the South Coast, attracted more than 20,000 visitors.

The ordnance disposal experts exhibited a number of dangerous items that the public might find, and answered questions on their bomb disposal role.

Calling info ops

QINETIQ needs the help of current and recent information operations practitioners of any rank in the UK armed services to produce a new edition of Milipedia, the computer-based Info Ops guidance, for DEC ISTAR.

This request has the full knowledge and support of DEC ISTAR, so would you be prepared to talk, in strict confidence, to the QinetiQ Info Ops team about your experience and help assemble a library of case studies and lessons learnt?

If you can help, then please contact Mike Stubbings, e-mail mstubbings@qinetiq.com, telephone 01684 895845 by 30 September 30.

On the front Lion

OFFICER cadets from Britannia Royal Naval College spent some time on board the French navy's training ship FS Lion at sea in one's of the busiest shipping lanes along the south coast.

French Naval cadets in their third year of training at the *École Naval* spend time on board the Lion to develop their skills as officers of the watch and in navigation.

So the British cadets enjoyed a night-time coastal-navigation exercise around Portland Bill in rough seas.

Meanwhile the French naval cadets were putting their skills to the test in BRNC's state-of-the-art bridge trainer.

Attention!
• looking for companionship?
• searching for that special someone?
• or just good friends?
Civilians welcome
Visit
forcespenpals.co.uk
Free access to snailmail facility for navy personnel

UNLOCK THE MONEY IN YOUR CAR TODAY
and keep driving it!
• Money for **any** purpose
• Often available to pay out on **same day**
Contact your local rep on:
0870 606 2266
24/7
www.logbookloans.co.uk
THE UK'S ORIGINAL LOG BOOK LOANS CO.
Written quotations on request. A Logbook loan is secured on your car.



TRAINEE sailors from Hawke Division at HMS Raleigh have adopted Hearing Dogs for the Deaf as their official charity, and hope to raise enough money to sponsor one of the charity's talented dogs.

Young officers at the establishment's Defence Maritime Logistics School have also been making charity money for the Vitalise Churchtown centre by washing, polishing, and ironing items for their fellow sailors. The seven trainee officers raised £288.22.

White Ensign walks around the world

THE 25-mile White Ensign Walk organised by the Falklands Veterans Foundation has got people up and walking around the world.

In Malaysia an international team of five from the Headquarters Integrated Air Defence System in Penang, led by Lt Cdr Andy Horner, walked the circuit of the former RAF base RMAF Butterworth.

Over in the Northern Arabian Gulf five sailors from HMS Cornwall took turns on the treadmill to raise more than £1,100 for the veterans charity.

The event was organised by LS Jason Donovan, whose brother is a veteran of the Falklands.

Jason said: "My brother has not returned to the Falklands since the war, but I know he will now have a place to stay if he ever decides to make the trip back.

"To walk 25 miles is the least we can do for the veterans who gave so much 25 years ago."

It's not just abroad where White Ensign walkers have struck.

The Royal Marines Museum in Southsea hosted an event where members of the museum's staff and Naval personnel marched along Southsea seafront to raise money for the Gosport-based charity.

Find out more about the Falklands Veterans Foundation at www.fvf.org.uk.



● *"Although we had to swim up the majority of the mountains, the challenge was great fun."*

Peak havoc

THE PEAKS of the British Isles must have been crowded with Naval folk over recent months as there have been two different teams tackling the Three Peaks Challenge, and one team who had to go one better with the Four Peaks Challenge.

First to a team of sailors from the Maritime Warfare School at HMS Collingwood – where 19 walkers and eight drivers managed to climb the three highest peaks in England, Scotland and Wales in 23 hours 47 minutes.

The walk was organised by CPO Paul Johnson, whose five-year-old daughter Hannah was diagnosed with acute lympho blastic leukaemia.

The team's efforts have raised the truly impressive amount of £22,000, with the majority split between charities Leukaemia Research UK and CLIC Sargent, with a portion going towards the Hannah Johnson Trust Fund to provide the little girl with the holiday of a lifetime on completion of her chemotherapy treatment.

It was the three peaks of Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike and Mount Snowdon that inspired the walkers of HMS Edinburgh's ship's company (although currently serving in HMS Exeter under the sea swap initiative).

The walkers took up the challenge to commemorate the life of one of their shipmates, Ryan Kemp, who was killed in a motorbike accident last year.

A huge party of people from HMS Edinburgh and members of Ryan's family (aged from 15 to 59) scaled the peaks to gather more than £5,000 for the Royal Naval Benevolent Trust (RNBT).

It seems the weather was not in benevolent mood however – "Although we had to swim up the majority of mountains, the challenge was great fun," said AB(WS) Shaun Baldwin.

S/Lt Olly Shepherd added: "This was a fantastic way to remember Ryan and raise a lot of money for a great charity that has done a lot to support the family."

Finally a team of four from the Navy's oldest warship took part in the annual Four Peaks challenge – climbing to the tops of Ben Nevis, Helvellyn, Snowdon and Carantouhill within 48 hours.

HMS Victory's commanding officer, Lt Cdr John Scivier, drove the team of three walkers – Lt John Webb, PO Robert 'Buster' Brown and LOM Leah 'Timmy' Mallett a total of 1,800 miles around the British Isles.

But it seems that inclement weather was a factor for the Victory walkers too...

Lt Cdr Scivier said: "Conditions for the weekend were less than ideal with rain and wind being the theme for the whole weekend.

"The team were particularly surprised to encounter almost white-out conditions and a snow-covered peak on Ben Nevis in June.

"The constant wetness, however, never dampened spirits and had little effect on momentum."

The officer told how proud he was of his team and their achievement, particularly for their fundraising.

The team notched up a remarkable total of £31,501 for their total walk, netting them the trophy for the most funds raised, and a position of fourth overall against the 39 teams competing in the charity's challenge.

Anyone interested in supporting the 2008 event should visit: www.woodenspoon.org.uk.

On the move with RNBT

FORMER Naval rating Lisa Elliot has been rescued by the Royal Naval Benevolent Trust from being trapped at home.

Lisa has a chronic condition that causes her to have blackouts – leaving her housebound as she has been medically advised not to travel on public transport as the heat and crowding can trigger her condition.

Lisa fell ill while under training at HMS Raleigh, but as a former rating in the Royal Navy she was eligible for a grant from the RNBT.

The charity has given Lisa a new lease of life by providing her with an electrically-powered scooter.

Lisa said: "Sometimes this condition can feel like a prison sentence, especially since I haven't been able to drive.

"It's a two-mile round trip to take my daughter Grace to nursery, and having the scooter means I can do things like pop out to do my own shopping."

The RNBT provides grants to people who have served or are still serving as ratings in the Royal Navy and other ranks in the Royal Marines.

Find out more at www.rnbt.org.uk.

Marine Mark's stray hyphen

A VEXATIOUS hyphen marred the website address for marathon-running Royal Marine, Sgt Mark Hayes. Anyone wishing to pledge their support to the green beret as he prepares to tackle the New York marathon should visit: www.justgiving.com/RoyalMarines. (Absolutely positively no hyphens anywhere in the address.)

Jane's back

RESERVIST Cdr Jane Allen has completed her 13-week 1,192-mile solo walk from John O'Groats to Land's End, netting more than £7,500 for the Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal.

In suitable Naval fashion, Jane was welcomed at her Cornish destination – despite terrible weather – by fellow members of her reservist unit HMS Vivid, reservists from the RNR Branch at RNAS Culdrose and members of the Royal British Legion.

On arrival Jane launched the Poppy People Campaign in Cornwall, looking for a fresh generation of volunteers to aid the Legion's annual Poppy Appeal.

NEED initial FREE LEGAL ADVICE?

Then contact:

FORCES LAW

A Nationwide network of highly experienced Independent Solicitors

Who advise and represent Service Personnel, Reservists, the Civil Service and their Families

Contact:

0845 601 1260

or

www.forceslaw.com

for a Local Lawyer who

SPEAKS YOUR LANGUAGE

COURTS MARTIAL • DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES • EMPLOYMENT and REINSTATEMENT of RESERVE FORCES PERSONNEL • SERVICE INVESTIGATIONS • CRIME • HOUSE or BUSINESS PURCHASE or SALE including LSAP's • DIVORCE CHILDREN PENSIONS and TERMINAL GRANTS • ACCIDENTS and COMPENSATION • ARMED FORCES COMPENSATION SCHEME PREVIEW • WILLS or DEATH of a RELATIVE

Quality mocha on Ocean

WHEN Britain's mightiest warship appeared over the horizon at Barbados, it didn't forget to focus on the little things in life...

Elaine Hinkson, an 83-year-old widow, was living in a house that needed an awful lot of work – but a team of sailors from HMS Ocean arrived on her doorstep ready to transform the world in which she lived.

CPOAC 'Jack' Frost first visited the widow in her home in Barbados to assess the work that needed doing at the suggestion of the Barbados Legion.

Over two days, led by himself and by CPOMEA Mike Pickup, the sailors demolished dilapidated outhouses, cleared the garden, destroyed 5 termite nests, fitted a new window and put the finishing touches to restore the house to former glory.

"She was really appreciative," said Jack. "And it was simple things."

He laughed: "The whole house was red and she didn't like it. But she hadn't been able to do anything about it. So we just asked her what colour she wanted."

"She said anything other than red," said CPO Mike Pickup. "We chose a nice mocha. She loved it. She used to come out in the yard and sing for us while we working."

Mike said there was no problem in getting members of the ship's company along to help: "There was about a dozen of us from all sorts of trades.

"It's better than just going to the pub. It's getting out, seeing the place, meeting the people, learning the history."

HMS Portland has taken over from Ocean on the Caribbean beat, and the senior rates have already been in touch with the ship, hoping that they will return to Elaine's house to keep up the good work.

Jack's charity focus is also centred close to home – his 12-year-old son Reece attends the Fiveways School in Yeovil that helps children with learning difficulties.

Jack has collection boxes stationed around the ship, gathering the motley assortment of change accrued during the ship's four-month deployment.

The Marines on board have offered to help out – "I just mentioned to their sergeant major what I was doing, and then they came to tell me they were going to have a moustache-growing competition to put some money towards the school," said Jack.

All the money will go back to Fiveways School's Phoenix Fund to help buy much-needed school equipment after a disastrous fire two years ago.

And as a final note, the aircraft controller – in another of his good-hearted roles – works for the RSPCA in his family home of Stoke on Trent.

When he left home four months ago, he had adopted, as a rescue dog from the RSPCA, a small brown-eyed puppy that would fit comfortably in his five-year-old daughter's arms.

During his four months away the miniature canine has now grown to fill Jack's spot in the king-size bed at home, and shows no sign of stopping.

Jack laughed: "He's eaten the Sky cables, the phone lines, £70 of school shoes and he's sleeping in my bed. But I wouldn't change it for the world."

Although Jack knows exactly who deserves all the praise for the home full of four children and rescue dog...

"Don't forget to mention my wife, Carole. Blimey, she's the one who does all the hard work."

news in brief

■ **NINE Reservists from HMS Vivid in Plymouth took park in the Race for Life around the Hoe and waterfront, pulling together £500 for Cancer Research UK.**

■ A COFFEE morning organised by Neptune Chaplaincy at the Scottish base raised more than £160 for Erskine Hospital. Organiser Margaret Reid said: "It was absolutely chock-a-block in the chaplaincy, there were people everywhere. We couldn't believe how much money we raised."

■ **FOUR former FAA Field Gunners from the 1970s are climbing on their bikes to pedal from Carnoustie in Scotland down to Coventry in memory of Paul Dunn, who died of cancer in June. Money raised will go to support St Dunstans summer camp at HMS Sultan. Anyone willing to support the cyclists should write to Al Price, 7 Edgecombe Crescent, Gosport PO13 9RD.**

■ FALKLAND Island Veterans benefited from a coffee morning held at Gosport Business Centre. The commander of HMS Collingwood, Cdr Allun Watts, presented £530 to help provide accommodation on the islands for veterans wishing to return to the area. Any donations to Andrew Weston, Fraser Gate, Aerodrome Road, Gosport PO13 0FQ.

■ **A FORMER Scout, PO Paul 'Paddy' Williams encouraged his colleagues at the Royal Naval School of Flight Deck Operations at RNAS Culdrose to help renovate the Helston Scout Hut near the Cornish air base.**

■ TWENTY officers and ratings from the Scottish reservists units of HMS Scotia and HMS Dalriada joined up to help this year's 70 Wild Miles triathlon in the Highlands – 47 miles on the bike, ten miles canoeing in Loch Etive then 13 miles running in Glen Etive. The reservists supported the canoeing stage, patrolling the loch in their rigid inflatable boats. Sub Lt Alastair Browne said: "When we support this event, we need to be totally self-sufficient in every respect. This tests our skills and training to the limit. We not only need to excel on the water, but also need to organise logistics, victualling and transport for ourselves and the equipment."

■ **SAILORS from Liverpool reservist unit HMS Eaglet hosted 27 children from the Chernobyl Children Life Line charity for a day's activities in the headquarters in Brunswick Dock. Lt Cdr Pat Barron said: "We were delighted to help. When I saw the request I thought this would be an ideal opportunity to show youngsters what life in a RN Reserve unit is all about."**

■ SIX cyclists, one support van, over 1,000 miles – people from the Maritime Commisssioning Trials and Assessment (MCTA) are climbing on their bikes to pedal from John O'Groats to Land's End to raise money for the cancer charity FORT (the Friends of Oncology and Radiotherapy Trust) at St Mary's hospital in Portsmouth. Find out more and pledge your support online at www.mctacharitycycle.blogspot.com.

■ **CARRIER HMS Ark Royal has pledged its support to the RNLI and its Train One, Save Many campaign. The warship's crew met with the RNLI's Tower Lifeboat station crew to announce the link.**

● *Cdr Steve Pearson of HMS Ark Royal hands over money raised on the carrier for the RNLI to members of the Tower Lifeboat*



Golden times at Wildfire

NORTHWOOD reserve unit HMS Wildfire marked its 50th birthday with pomp, ceremony and suitable musical accompaniment.

Family, friends, local dignitaries and top brass, headed by Flag Officer Reserves Rear Admiral Tony Johnstone-Burt, were invited to ceremonial divisions – the very last time reservist officers' distinctive 'Rs' were worn on parade.

Divisions, inspected by Rear Admiral Johnstone-Burt, coincided with awards to some of Wildfire's top achievers.

But no award was more heartfelt than the Gloria Ademokun Memorial Trophy, presented by her family to the 'top team' at Wildfire, led by S/Lt Laura Harrison. Gloria was a hugely-popular member of Wildfire's ship's company whose life was claimed at just 38 by leukaemia.

After the formal ceremony and VIP reception, it was time for the reservists to let their hair down, changing into banyan rig for a barbecue which lasted long into the night.

Falklands role remembered

CHATHAM Historic Dockyard honoured the contributions made by Medway sailors and their supporting civilians during the Falklands conflict with a veterans' day – 25 years to the day that the fleet returned to the naval base.

Around 500 former sailors, soldiers, airmen and dockyard employees attended a service of remembrance in the dockyard church before parading through the yard alongside serving personnel, reservists and cadets, to the music of HM Royal Marines Band Portsmouth, who also performed a Beat Retreat.



● *Happy shower... (l-r) S/Lt Euan Duncan carries the casket bearing the freedom scroll, marching alongside LLOGS(CS) – or leading chef – Chris Ball, and CPO 'Bungy' Williams, while PO(D) 'Eddie' Edmundson carries the White Ensign as the ship's company celebrates the freedom of Ledbury in the rain*

Picture: PO 'Framps' Frampton

Rain on our parade

CONSISTENT with the rotten summer we've been enduring, the ship's company of HMS Ledbury marched through the streets of their namesake market town in a deluge.

And evidently from the smiles on the faces above, they didn't mind too much.

Roughly one in every eight residents of the Herefordshire town turned out to see the Hunt-class warship's crew receive the freedom of the town – an honour surprisingly not bestowed upon the vessel, despite an association with Ledbury going back to 1941 and the previous bearer of the name.

That was something Mayor Kay Swinburne put right when she presented the scroll of freedom to Ledbury's CO Lt Cdr Paul Russell.

Having marched through the damp streets, the sailors dried off in the town's principal church for a service of remembrance, followed by a reception in the town hall, where they were joined by wartime veterans who recalled the previous HMS Ledbury's exploits (she played key roles in the ill-fated Russian convoy PQ17 and also the relief operation of Malta, Pedestal).

"It's great to see that the affiliation and the spirit of the townsfolk involved continues to go from strength to strength," said Lt Cdr Russell.

AB(MW) Mark Priestman added: "The reception from the townsfolk was outstanding – I felt very proud to be connected with Ledbury."

Chiddingfold sets the benchmark

MINEHUNTER HMS Chiddingfold has notched up a series of firsts for herself and the mine warfare community over the spring and early summer.

She became the first mine counter-measures vessel to go through Operational Sea Training with two vital new pieces of kit.

WECDIS electronic charts are becoming standard across the RN and RFA Fleet – and a welcome addition they are to the bridge team's inventory.

"It was certainly different not having to constantly draw up Faslane 'in and out' charts for different tides," said a delighted Lt Si Shaw, Chiddingfold's navigator.

"All I did was load the route from computer each morning."

WECDIS eases the load on the navigator; SeaFox makes the destruction of mines quicker and easier.

SeaFox is being introduced across all Hunt and Sandown-class ships, replacing the existing 'yellow submarines'.

The black submersible launches, locates and then destroys a suspicious contact – but also destroys itself in the process.

Chiddingfold is the first ship to be tested by the FOST team in its use of the new weapon – and the ship's company showed their prowess in using SeaFox by using it to attack a deep-water contact for the first time.

After receiving the thumbs up from FOSTies, the ship bade farewell to CO Lt Cdr Andrew Stacey after 18 months in charge.

"I'm very proud of my ship's company in the way they have thrown themselves into challenges, overcoming hurdles along the way with cheerfulness and hard work," he said.

"Chiddingfold leads the way with SeaFox following a lot of work and training."



DSEi
11-14 September 2007
ExCeL London UK
www.dsei.co.uk

Defence Systems & Equipment International 2007

The world's most prestigious defence exhibition.

New for 2007
DSEi Global Defence Conference
www.dsei.co.uk/conference

Apply to attend DSEi:
www.dsei.co.uk

- Visit the largest fully integrated defence exhibition
- View the full capability of the international defence industry at a single exhibition
- Meet and do business in a world-class environment
- See first hand the latest land, air and sea capabilities
- Network with every element of the defence supply chain
- Access naval ships berthed alongside the exhibition halls

Apply now
Tel: +44 (0) 870 486 7210
Web: www.dsei.co.uk
Email: applications@dsei.co.uk

To exhibit please contact
Tel: +44 (0) 208 439 8888
Email: enquiries@dsei.co.uk

Reed Exhibitions®

In association with the UK Ministry of Defence

Terre Force One



WITH the rotors barely stopped after flying over the capital for Falklands 25 commemorations, the Lynx fliers of 847 Naval Air Squadron packed their bags for a massif deployment.

Three Mk7 Lynx with 50 personnel decamped to Gap-Tallard airfield between Grenoble and Nice for experience in high-altitude operations.

The Massif des Écrins to the northeast of Gap provided the perfect (and relatively warm) environment for operating at higher altitudes.

Gap-Tallard airfield is home to training for the *Aviation Légère de l'Armée de Terre* – French Army Light Aviation, the Gallic counterpart of Britain's Army Air Corps – who admirably hosted the Fleet Air Arm fliers during their fortnight in France.

Gap is also home to adrenalin junkies – chiefly free-fall parachutists who love leaping above the massif.

And that posed problems for the 847 fliers.

"Every member of the aircrew was used for lookouts – especially for the parachutists, but also guarding against rotor blade strikes with the rocks," explained Lt Mike Vallance, one of 847's Qualified Helicopter Instructors (QHI).

Rocks and jumpers were not the only challenges the fliers had to contend with.

Turbulence, air density and temperatures all made flying tricky – the Lynx Mk7 is limited to 10,000ft so with the tips of numerous mountains in the massif topping that, their pinnacles proved out of reach.

The fortnight in Gap-Tallard saw the aircrew first carry out flights with their training instructors aboard to ensure pilots adequately reconnoitred potential landing sites – and picked out possible escape routes in case anything went wrong.

And once the QHIs were happy, they stayed behind at the airbase while the pilots tackled the mountains on their own.

"The training at Gap means that 847's aircrew can operate effectively in mountainous terrain and that we have confidence – we know that the skills learned, even in the south of France, will be invaluable on future deployments in operational theatres," said pilot Lt Adam Zipfell.

Given Gap's reputation for adventure training and extreme sports, during downtime the 847 team was spoiled for choice: some headed into the hills, others tried white water rafting and mountain biking.

2007 has seen frantic activity for the Lynx squadron, part of the Commando Helicopter Force, opening with cold weather training inside the Arctic Circle in northern Norway; then the 847 team helped Ark Royal through her Operational Sea Training; they remained in Ark for NATO war games in the Baltic, Exercise Noble Mariner; then the Lynx returned briefly to Blighty for the Falklands commemorations before heading to southern France.

The pace of life should slacken now back at Yeovilton – but only slightly as the squadron acquaints itself with the next generation of their aircraft, Lynx Mk9 (also known as 'Battlefield Lynx'), which is already in service with the Army Air Corps.

And once acquainted with Battlefield Lynx, 847 deploys to Afghanistan and Iraq in support of British peacekeeping missions.

● *Twin peaks... (Left) An 847 Lynx flies over a pair of distinctively-shaped rocks in the Massif des Écrins and (below) two Lynx prepare to set down on a plateau in the massif*

● *Massif attack... (Main picture) A Lynx banks over the surprisingly lush terrain of the Massif des Écrins northeast of Gap*

Pictures: LA(Phot) Billy Bunting, RNAS Yeovilton







Power to the people

MORE than 250 sailors and aircrew helped to retain the electricity supply to thousands of homes in flood-stricken Gloucestershire.

Personnel were drafted in from across the Navy to assist the huge relief operation along the Severn valley as waters threatened to engulf two substations at Walham and Castle Mead.

After an initial batch of 100 sailors from Devonport – chiefly HM Ships Ocean and Northumberland – arrived at the weekend, a further 100 personnel were dispatched from RNAS Yeovilton as the crisis deepened.

They were immediately split into teams of 25 to fill sand bags and place them around the two substations.



The Navy's sailors worked through the night and the walls of bags they erected helped to limit the flood waters' effect on the electricity installations.

The teams were initially not hopeful. "When I arrived at Castle Mead, it was worse than I imagined – even the goal posts in one field were submerged," said AB Ross Gemmell.

But once the sailors got to work they were amazed by the 'blitz spirit' of everyone working to a common aim.

"It was a hard job that needed to be done," said AB Ricky Stenning. "We were fed on-site by the Salvation Army and by an Army field kitchen when we got back – cold and wet."

At Walham the Severn peaked just two inches below the top of the sandbag boundary wall, while the rising waters at Castle Mead did eventually force electric company Central Networks to switch off supply to thousands of homes.

But, under the lead of Capt Mike Postgate RM of HMS Ocean, the Navy team continued to labour alongside other military and civil authorities to drain the water away from the substation and bring back power safely to the people of the surrounding area.

The managing director of the electric company, John Crackett, said: "It's been a tremendous effort and the Armed Forces and emergency services have done a terrific job in helping us restore power to thousands of homes in the region and safeguard the substation under very challenging conditions."

He added: "Our engineers and the emergency and armed services all worked around the clock to put in place a flood barrier."

Cdr Stuart Borland, normally HMS Ocean's Weapon Engineer Officer, but now coordinating the RN's relief operation around Gloucester, praised the united effort which saved the power.

"Despite the rising water and uncomfortable conditions, the RN teams and local fire brigade worked through the night into the early hours and helped make good the defences," he said.

"Despite the long hours and conditions and rising waters, the spirits of personnel are very high. They're keen to volunteer for whatever is required in the next few days."

It's not only power that the Naval personnel have kept flowing as they ensured that water supplies are restored to people within the area.

The sailors from Yeovilton, alongside Gurkhas from the Infantry Battle School and firefighters from the Fire Brigade, were kept busy carrying and laying pipes at the flooded Mythe water treatment centre in Tewkesbury that – when working – supplies water to up to 150,000 people in the Gloucester area.

A team of 24 from carrier HMS Ark Royal took over from their exhausted colleagues to clean and refill tanks at the waterplant.

A Sea King Search and Rescue helicopter from RNAS Culdrose has been keeping an eye on the flooding as the weather has taken its toll on the nation's countryside.

Other units are on standby to help if conditions should worsen and the freak floods continue.

● *(Top) Sailors and firefighters work together at the Mythe waterworks, (right) toiling to build a wall of sandbags to protect the Walham electricity substation (below) and (left) Cdr Stuart Borland who is heading up the Navy's emergency team*

■ *See also Sea Cadets, page 42*

Pictures: LA(Phots) Emz Tucker and Paul A'Barrow









From dusk til

Before the Caribbean cloak falls across the Ocean is on anti-drug for the traffickers run islands. Helen Crave swing...

ON BOARD the Royal Navy's largest warship the White Ensign is lowered. HMS no longer, Ocean forges her way through the Caribbean waters but no one on board pauses to lament her departure from the Fleet.

Orange light bathes intense faces. Officers and ratings stand, eyes fixed on the radar display as brightly coloured shapes shift position on the screen. The tense quiet of the ops room is broken by a harsh crackle from the comms.

Hands punch the air, chairs spin, smiles break out – the word from the Merlin helicopter "Bales ditched."

HMS Ocean is on day two of her third and final anti-drug patrol in the Caribbean.

The massive air assault ship is – unlikely as it seems for her size and girth – on silent prowl in the waters of the central Caribbean.

At the bidding of the anti-narcotics Joint Inter Agency Task Force (South), the Navy's largest warship is bringing her unique talents to bear monitoring the air bridge used by drug-traffickers between South America and the Caribbean.

And just a few hours earlier, a suspect aircraft had been picked up as it flew, low, slow and silent, north to the islands of the Caribbean.

A Sea King Airborne Surveillance and Control helicopter of 854 NAS tracked the aircraft, and a 700M Merlin was sent ahead to be a silent presence.

As the equatorial dusk made its sudden shift from bright day to black night, the Merlin flew in close pursuit of the light aircraft, entirely directed by the controlling words of the Sea King and its distant radar.

And then as the little aeroplane slowly circled in the sky, the Merlin held back in the dark, waiting for the pilot to spot the light flashing from the surface of the waters below.

At this point in the ops room, figures are clustered around the Principal Warfare Officer and his intricate display. One question uppermost in everyone's mind – is the aircraft about to drop bales of drugs to the waiting motorboat below?

The wait seemed interminable then the news came through that the helicopter had picked up a light contact on the surface of the sea.

Ocean's mast now, instead of the Royal Navy's White Ensign, bore the flag of the US Coast Guard, as the warship became – albeit briefly – the US Coast Guard Cutter Ocean, the arrest authority for JIATF's anti-narcotics work.

As the aeroplane turned back, the Merlin dropped low to find the boat on the water's dark surface.

And once in position, the unsuspecting trio inside the boat were suddenly caught in the full glare of the helicopter's lights as it hovered alongside.

The horrified smugglers dropped to the deck, scuttling among the drug-bales on their boat, as the grey Naval Merlin with its general purpose machine gun and Royal Marine sniper flashed into existence before their eyes.

Inside the helicopter an officer of the US Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment signed for them to stop.

And silence reigned in the ops room.

A crackle.

A buzz from the headset.

"Bales ditched."

And the go-fast fled for shore, dashing, rushing, weaving for its island home as the Merlin, 100 feet above the waves, pursued and harried its prey until there was no hope of the drug-runners finding their abandoned cargo.

The bundles were plucked from the sea by the helicopters of the Fleet Air Arm and the landing craft of the Royal Marines in a night's work that stretched into first light as the last bales were recovered.

The next morning brought an unexpected result when one oddly-shaped bale disgorged 26 stone-shaped packages, which after several hours of testing were judged to be strong-grade heroin – an unusual discovery to find crossing the air-bridge between South America and the Caribbean.

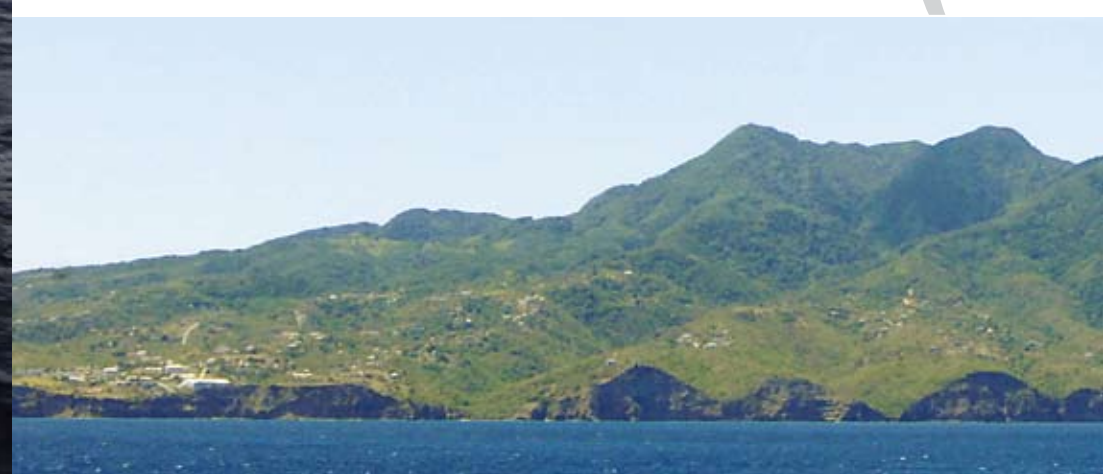
This cargo of drugs will never make their way to the pushers and peddlers of the European and US markets.

"The beauty of counter-drugs operations" said Ocean's commanding officer Capt Russ Harding, "is that everyone in the ship can immediately see that we're making a difference to people back in the UK.

"And particularly at this time when we are at

war in
people
– some
be quit
"But
circulat
huge re
And
been su
Not
during
regular
and the
more th
well – r
t
n
th
wh
drew ac
The
new he
Marine
only in
to rapt
In a
diplom
the isla
Virgin
And
her con
ing cha
limping
jungle
Hurr
Caribbe
eye on
blown
The

Pictures: LA(Pho





n sun broaches the horizon the helicopters take off. As night's e sea the helicopters stay in the dark sky. Air assault ship HMS g patrol in the Central Caribbean, watching the skies and the seas nning their deadly trade between South America and the Caribbean n reports from HMS Ocean as Operation Rum Chaser is in full

dawn

two theatres, Iraq and Afghanistan – those are delivering things for the UK every day times if you're not there in theatre, it can e difficult.

something like this – taking drugs out of tion, disrupting the drug flow as well, is a eassurance for people."

reassurance for people is what Ocean has upplying in spades...

only has she made two major drug busts her stint in the Caribbean, and slowed the drug route by air between South America e Caribbean to almost standstill, but she has han found time for her primary tasking as eassurance to British overseas territories in he Caribbean.

The assault ship's four-month deployment to the Caribbean has seen her flying he flag throughout the islands as well as to the shores of the US beyond.

A planned ten-day stop in Norfolk, Virginia, extended to almost three weeks when a diesel generator needed some attention. But all the time alongside was put to good use by the men and women who make up the ship's company of HMS Ocean.

The massive warship hosted the biggest Defence Export Sales event in the US, here the two Merlin HM1 of 700M NAS dmiring glances.

Merlin has been chosen to become the licopter for the US President's own flight One, and 700M showed off its prowess not Norfolk but further afield at the Pentagon audiences.

combination of port visits and 'drive-by' acy, HMS Ocean made reassuring calls to nds of Trinidad, Montserrat, and the British Island of Tortola, to name but a few...

the islands have welcomed the warship and mpany with open arms – and a raft of sport-llenges which has resulted in more people than the tangled roots of the West African during October's Vela deployment.

ricane season began as Ocean patrolled the ean beat, and the islanders keep a wary the tropical storms that can fester into full hurricane.

Navy's help when Hurricane Mitch in 1998 passed south of Jamaica before hitting the Central American nation of Honduras remains at the front of people's minds.

And particularly in Montserrat where the Naval helicopters flew the island's governors and survey teams over the still-smoking volcano at the island's heart which grumbles menacingly of a possible explosion.

But it is the work with the US Coast Guard and the American JIATF that has caught the attention of the public back in the UK.

The two big busts for the warship – one in her first week of anti-drug patrols and one in her third – have taken over £50 million of street value narcotics out of the market, not to mention the impact of her presence on the drug cartels' regular runs across the Caribbean sea.

And the credit is shared by all on board the warship, ops officer Lt Cdr Simon Rogers said: "It's teamwork. It's a huge operation on here to make sure that it all comes together.

"Nothing would work if each different section of the ship didn't work together."

He acknowledges that Ocean is one small element in the overall war on drugs: "Information came in from the squadrons' helicopters airborne, Ocean's own sensors and radars, from other US Coast Guard aircraft flying and from JIATF.

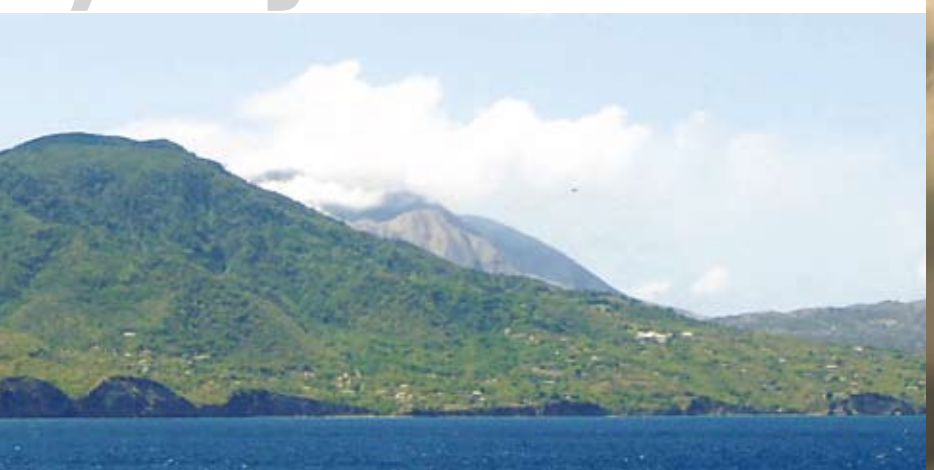
"The US warned us that an aircraft was coming our way. We told our ASaC where to look. It found it and passed the location back down to us. We launched our aircraft and landing craft in good time.

"All that we provide is one piece of the jigsaw for their overall effort."

Although a long way from home, the men and women on HMS Ocean and in the two squadrons are proud to be doing their bit to prevent drugs from coming to British shores.

Pictures from top left: HMS Ocean sails from Devonport in February at the start of her four-month deployment; a Sea King ASaC from 854 NAS on the deck with a 700M Merlin in the background; US Marine Corps Sea Knight CH46 helicopters worked with the Royal Navy on board Ocean; a tail rotor from an embarked ASaC; the volcano on the Caribbean island of Montserrat shrouded by its own smoke; HMS Ocean – with the biggest flightdeck in the RN

ot) Ray Jones









● *The landing craft of 9 Assault Squadron train with a boarding party from Ocean*



● *Being a Royal Marine is more than skin deep*



Green days

FOR THE Royal Marines of 9 Assault Squadron on board HMS Ocean this deployment to the Caribbean has been a bit out of the ordinary.

In her usual assault ship role, carrying up to 600 Marines on board, the 30 men and four landing craft of 9ASRM are constantly busy with their green brethren.

So this stint in the Caribbean sunshine has provided ample opportunity for other pursuits – such as training other defence forces, sporting fixtures, diving, preparing for disaster scenarios and tasks such as capsize drills for people from Ocean's company (and the occasional journalist)...

My first thought is that those waves just didn't look so high from up on Ocean's deck.

The landing craft of 9ASRM is bobbing and weaving on the tops of the azure waves, those same blue blue waves that had looked so enticing from the assault carrier's deck, and now look so daunting as they loom alongside the LCVP.

Gleefully Royal Marines are hurling themselves into the waves and I'm sat on top of the landing craft just wondering what on earth I'm doing in the middle of the Caribbean ocean – and I mean it, this is really in the middle of the Caribbean ocean with any Caribbean beach and its Caribbean hammocks and its Caribbean cocktails a long long long way away.

Of course, ten minutes later I came to the happy realisation that the nearest bit of the Caribbean was in fact just three miles away.

Unfortunately those miles were straight down beneath my feet as I fell backwards off the dinghy into (admittedly rather beautifully blue, and pleasantly warm) sea.

However no moment to enjoy the Caribbean waters as we are mid capsize drill, and at this point I'm desperately struggling to remember the number I'd been given – it could only be one to six, so it wasn't as if the choice was that difficult.

Shout your number, make your way round to the back of the capsized rigid inflatable boat then climb back up onto the upturned hull. Or clamber, haul, and in my case, get shoved on top by the cheerful Marines who for some reason were finding this whole thing terribly amusing.

Then make the capsize rope tight, grip it firmly and stand up – oh damn, no one else is standing up... Fall in. Swim round. Clamber (push, shove, heave) up. Try again.

Over flips the turtle-shell of the hull, with one of our team clinging desperately to the sponson, having spent several patient minutes in the miniature air bubble beneath the hull waiting for us to complete the manoeuvre.

Then it's swim, slide, haul, curse and grab back into the boat – possibly slightly easier to get in to when it's right way up. But not much.

And back to the landing craft and whizz back to HMS Ocean.

But remember those giant waves...?

Oh, the Marines were very kind to a bedraggled journalist suffering from seasickness from the back of a landing craft...



● *The US Coast Guard cutter Sapelo picks up the bales of cocaine and heroin from one of Ocean's landing craft*

Silent running

THE US Coast Guard are the policemen of the seas for the American Joint Inter Agency Task Force (South) that strikes against the drug dealers, and their officers maintain a strict anonymity to protect themselves and their families from vengeful retribution.

A small team of the US Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET) set off with HMS Ocean from a wet and windy Plymouth at the start of this four-month deployment and it is only within their jurisdiction that arrests and seizures have been carried out.

Each British ship on counter-narcotics work will carry a team of six to nine officers from the LEDET during their patrol, as will ships from the US, Dutch or French navies – any of the nations with an interest in this cluster of islands that make up the Caribbean and an interest in slashing back the destructive drug trade.

The LEDET teams have a wider remit than just narcotics work, encompassing national security, counter-terrorism, people-smuggling and territory protection, but describe the counter-narcotics and counter-immigration work as their 'bread and butter'.

Last year the US Coast Guard in their operations around the world seized 234,337lbs of cocaine, and this year to date their total is already close to the 200,000lbs mark.

● *The Landing Craft (Vehicle and Personnel) of 9 Assault Squadron Royal Marines – great fun when charging through the waves but not good for the seasick when stationary...*



New kids on the block

OPERATION Rum Chaser has brought together the Navy's latest helicopters and the Navy's oldest helicopters on board HMS Ocean in a completely new way.

The state-of-the-art Merlins of 700M NAS are new to HMS Ocean – this is in fact only the second time that Merlins have operated from the assault ship, but the other new boys are new in name only...

While 854 NAS is a recent addition to the Fleet Air Arm, the squadron's Sea King ASaC are seasoned veterans of carriers' decks, but hitherto the Mark 7 helicopters had flown under the title of 849 NAS A Flight.

Commanding Officer Lt Cdr David 'Ronnie' Biggs said: "The change has given the squadron a long-yearned for identity as a separate squadron. There have been a myriad of small gains.

"It's about identity – about people knowing what 854 is and what it brings to the party."

The two squadron's aircraft have been working together in a completely new tasking for ships on station in the Caribbean on anti-drug patrol.

Normally this is the patrol route of a frigate, destroyer or Royal Fleet Auxiliary with a singleton aircraft, so HMS Ocean with her expansive flightdeck and multi-helo hangar has been able to bring something new to the mix.

The US anti-narcotics task force and Fleet saw the potential of Ocean's airborne eyes.

Hence the assault ship has been keeping a steady watch on the airbridge that the runners use to fly their illegal cargo between South America and the Caribbean, in addition to looking out for the 'go-fast' speedboats rushing northwards on the sea.

This operation has seen the two squadrons working seamlessly with Ocean to deliver the goods – whether catching the drug-runners in the act or deterring any attempt in the first place.

Commanding Officer of 700M NAS, Lt Cdr Gavin Richardson said: "It's a whole team effort – Ocean, ASaC and Merlin. It's a potent combination.

"The ASaC provides a good air picture which we can then be launched to support in order to watch an air track of interest."

Lt Cdr David 'Ronnie' Biggs explained: "There is a long-established working relationship between the airborne early warning and anti-submarine warfare communities. We have further developed those already-existing tactics.

"The sort of work we are doing here is surveillance – surveillance is what the Sea King ASaC does, like it says on the tin. From the sea, from the air and the land.

"It's been a good mixture of operations for us, and excellent detachments alongside."

The four helicopters – the two Merlins of 700M and two of the three Sea Kings in 854 – have been proving their worth beyond their traditional Naval roles.

The two COs are justifiably proud of their teams and how they have coped with this deployment.

Lt Cdr Richardson said: "We're a small unit that's come on board here, we've achieved a good flying rate, and achieved all that was asked of us operationally.

"I'm proud that the unit has risen to the challenge and delivered to the frontline.

"We can go everywhere and operate off everything. That's one of our strengths.

"The beauty of the aircraft is that it can quickly re-role anti-submarine warfare, casualty evacuation, search and rescue, vertical replenishment. It's very versatile.

"This is a tight-knit team – a really cracking team. We work together to achieve the aim, and always deliver. It's an extremely good unit with high standards."

Lt Cdr Biggs commented: "It's all about teamwork to make sure all is done effectively to get the result.

"I said to my troops what I wanted to see was bales and drugs and people in custody.

"This is a big team working together to that one aim. It's all about teamwork. That what it proves every time we do it. It's very satisfying. Great buzz in the crew.

"The engineers have to work very very hard to keep the aircraft going. I couldn't do anything in the world without a working aircraft. It's an old aircraft – but it's reliable and proven."

"It's a good combination between the two aircraft types – old and new," added Lt Cdr Richardson. "They've got an old airframe with some really cracking technology inside.

"The combination is potent and worked really well.

"These sorts of deployment don't come up very often. We are providing real-world tasking on the counter-narcotics side – trying to make the world a better place."



● *Merlin and Sea King together on Ocean's flightdeck*



● *Maintainers working on an 854 NAS Sea King – it still retains the distinctive red aardvark from when it was 849 NAS A Flight*



● *An ASaC Sea King comes in to land on Ocean's flightdeck*

What next for Ocean?

AFTER four months away, HMS Ocean has now returned to her home port in Devonport where after a well-earned spell of summer leave, her crew will take her into a 13-month docking period.

Conceived in the Cold War, HMS Ocean was never designed for the heat that has been her theatre for much of the past year.

Designed as a troop carrier to take Marines and their vehicles to the ice and snow of Norway, the assault ship was an economical hybrid of Naval and commercial shipping – but the two elements are not always natural partners.

Lt Cdr Dave O'Shaughnessy, the Senior Engineer on board, explained: "This is the first ship built to commercial standards, not to Naval standards. The main issue on here is obsolescence, getting hold of the necessary parts.

"Every ship gets defects and because of where we are in the upkeep cycle, the ETs are getting a really good grounding in hands-on engineering."

Now ten years old the assault ship is looking tired and ready for a bit of tender care with a programme of work with DML and the ship's company that will take her through to the end of the year and beyond.

And the warship has proven her worth despite leaking pipes and troublesome engines; she has spent just six weeks alongside in her home port of Devonport in the last 12 months.

A year which has seen her at the heart of the Vela amphibious deployment to West Africa in autumn, then up to Norway in the cold winter months, sea training in the characteristic Devon spring, then out to the Caribbean for sunshine and possible hurricanes as summer comes.

And the year has taken its toll on the various differing systems that make up the unique environment of this assault ship and the remarkably small team of hard-working engineers on board the Navy's biggest warship.

Chippie CPO George Gaitens said: "Because she's a one-off things are different. We haven't got the documentation or the stores back-up.

"A lot of the issues on here are general wear and tear. She has done what was asked for originally.

"It's just that we're asking more of her."

WO1 Rab Butler, the senior marine engineering rating, commented: "She is being driven hard through a harsh environment."

He added: "The reason she works hard is because she's useful. She's economical. She has two diesels so is relatively cheap to run. With a cheaper platform, you get more bang for your buck."

But her unique nature brings certain problems, he admits: "It doesn't make it impossible but it makes it challenging – particularly from an engineering point of view."

"Engineering is engineering – if it can go wrong it will go wrong. Machines break.

"It's the same as anything. If you have a car and don't service it, it starts to fail. Now she's ready for that service period," said Rab.

"Change the oils and the filters – and off she'll go again."

And back in the sunshine, frigate HMS Portland has taken over the Caribbean beat from her larger sister while Ocean's crew prepare for months of hard graft during her upkeep period, but at least it has the novelty of being hard graft in her home port for this hardworking ship.



LETTERS

Confessions of a cat burglar

REGARDING Roger Breakwell's letter about the missing stones for Lynx (July) I can shine some light on the mystery.

In order to lay stones on the camber opposite Stanley planning permission must be granted by the local body. Planning permission given to us had two conditions – '*ENDURANCE*' was to be moved 200 yards left and '*LYNX*' was to be lifted. The reasoning given was that the names were to be in chronological order, and that *LYNX* was never given permission to be laid. I confess we had no knowledge of the history surrounding its placement.

As to where the stones are – embedded in '*ENDURANCE*' to bring the height of her letters up to the specified size. The rest, my now muscular ship's company will readily confirm, came from Pony Pass and other quarries. I believe the tradition of laying stones comes from having a long association with the islands.

Certainly no offence was intended to Lynx, we were just carrying out the planning body's conditions. '*LEEDS CASTLE*' is still to be placed, however estimated at 66 tones lifting it will be another huge effort when the ground dries out after the winter.

One thing I would agree with, short names with straight letters is the way ahead for stone laying.

Good luck to Clyde should her turn come to lay stones!

– Lt Cdr Ian Lynn,
Commanding Officer, HMS Dumbarton Castle

Do we want the Wavy Navy?

I SUSPECT the removal of the RNR badge (July, page 21) is a sign of the times and the reserve bases will be scrapped.

Other than that, as a chap who was RNVR and RN I would personally be very disappointed to have been unable to wear my 'Wavy Navy' tie and lapel badge of which I was immensely proud in the past – proud to be seen as an enthusiastic volunteer.

I certainly didn't do it for the money (about £15 per annum).

– Edward Freathy
Committee member,
Ton Class Association

...NOW that the 'R' has been removed from reserve officers braid, would it not be a point to go one further and give the RNR Officers of the Combined Cadet Force the same braid as regular officers and not the 'Wavy Navy' braid?

The 'Wavy Navy' and the RNR twisted braid has long gone for volunteer and reserve officers, and the CCF is in effect wearing the volunteer reserve stripes from yesteryears.

The Cadet Army Officers and the RAF Officers wear the chevrons of the regular services and are commissioned in them whereas the RNR CCF are not.

In the age of equal opportunities should not this anomaly be addressed?

– Lt Cdr Alan Clifford, Queen Camel, Somerset

Falklands parade was first-rate

THIS letter is a note of gratitude to all the ratings who trained and took part in the Falklands Parade and to all the Ceremonial Training Staff who made it possible.

I joined the Navy as a baby apprentice in 1977 and went on to serve in the Falklands War in HMS Bristol as a Petty Officer MEA. I later left the Navy to join West Midlands Police.

It wasn't too long before I had the desire to return in some way and therefore joined the Royal Naval Reserve at HMS Forward in Birmingham. I am currently employed there as the Initial Training Officer and Deputy Recruiting Officer.

I was immensely keen to take part in the Falklands Parade and managed to secure special leave to attend. I was fortunate therefore to witness and take part in the week's training at HMS Excellent.

The ratings were drawn from all corners of the Fleet, which was evident by their cap tallies. Some had volunteered and others sent, but during the whole week I never heard anyone moan about being part of the group.

In case shipmates and divisional staff think otherwise, I can assure you the training was hard work, plentiful and tiring.

Those involved will recall the hour-long inspections every morning, the square-bashing on the drill square to get those wheels correct, lunch hours slumped over tables at the Spar in exhaustion and the long trip to London and back for the 0300 rehearsal.

This was spent standing in the rain mostly without coats or jumpers because the Army was an hour late!



● *The former First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Alan West, now Lord West of Spithead, leading the Royal Navy contingent for the Falklands 25 parade in June.* Picture: S E Rowse

I was particularly impressed by the way the Ceremonial Staff impressed upon everyone how important this event was to all the veterans, their families and for the memory of those left behind, ensuring that they all tried to appreciate and understand what sacrifices had been made during the conflict.

The staff, led by WO Ronnie Barker, did an amazing job all week providing top-class training and supportive management throughout. They had a very limited time to achieve the standard required for a BBC televised parade, but proceeded to do exactly that.

When Sunday arrived the ratings contributed in making the parade something which I felt privileged to be part of, and which I will always remember.

I sometimes hear the comment "it would have been done better in my day," but that was not the case here and on behalf of all the veterans, I would like to offer our sincere and heartfelt thanks to all the junior ratings on parade and our congratulations on their excellent performance on the day.

It is highly unlikely there will ever be such an event again to mark the Falklands War and you should all feel justifiably proud of yourselves.

– WO2 Steve Bland,
Initial Training Officer, HMS Forward, Birmingham

St Helena's sterling work

THANK you for publishing a very informative guide on the Falklands conflict.

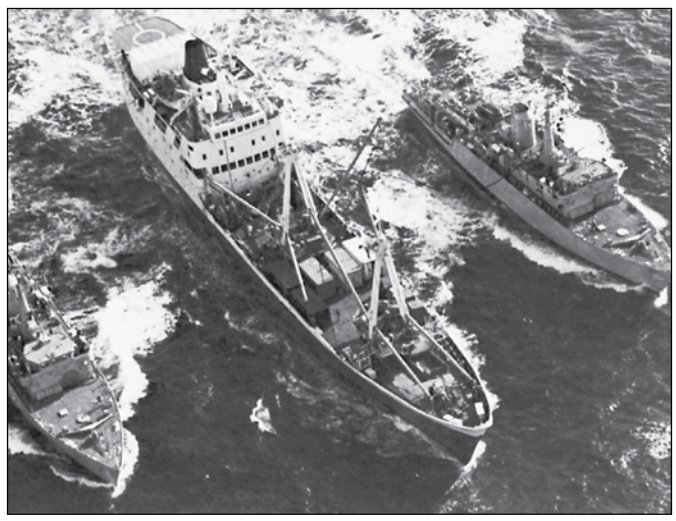
But there was no mention of the work carried out shortly after the war by the MCMVs HMS Ledbury and HMS Brecon along with the civilian support ship RMS Helena, which was partially manned by the Forward Support Unit (FSUO1) with a civilian crew mainly from the island of St Helena in the South Atlantic.

The civilian crew took us to their home port on the island before arriving at the Falklands, this was partly to allow the delivery of the post and goods that were part of the ship's normal delivery schedule.

I was on the St Helena and enjoyed their hospitality whilst on board and ashore on their home island.

The three ships did a large amount of work in checking for and clearing mines and diving on sunken aeroplanes in and around the waters of the Falklands.

After all, it was a long way to go in a balloon on water for the ships' companies of the minesweepers. It was even harder for the civilians on the St Helena to carry out RASes with little or no training.



● *The minesweeper support ship St Helena – deserving of a mention – replenishing HMS Ledbury and HMS Brecon after the Falklands conflict*

But everything always seemed to go to plan, even in rough seas.

I felt a little sorry for the civilians, as I believe they should have been given some sort of recognition for their hard work, but because we were not far enough south prior to June 14 1982, none of us got anything except maybe a thanks for a job well done from our CO.

– Allan Blanchard, former RO(G) on FSUO1, 1980-1982, Warwick

Remember Korea

WE have had celebrations for 50 years and 60 years for D-Day and the end of World War 2, then for Suez and now for Falklands 25.

All the celebrations are well-deserved but what about the Korean War?

Never a word is spoken about the period from June 1950 to June 1953. Don't forget that a lot of the campaigners in those days were National Service men on four shillings a day.

– A W Moore (former RM)
Earl Shilton, Leicestershire

Gibraltar

IN your article about HMS Northumberland (July, page 2) you mention that whilst at Gibraltar the ship hosted Cdre Allan Adair, the outgoing Governor.

The Governor and Commander-in-Chief Gibraltar is Lt General Robert Fulton, RM, the Commodore was or is Commander British Forces Gibraltar.

– Ernest Reading, Kenton, Harrow, Middlesex

Thank you, boxers

ATTENDING the recent Class A and B Amateur Boxing Association of England Championships hosted by the Royal Navy at HMS Nelson where I had a boxer competing in each class, I was very impressed with the overall organisation – it was superb.

Unfortunately one of my boxers was knocked out and while at first he seemed to have recovered, after an hour or so his condition deteriorated and we rushed him to Queen Alexandra Hospital in an ambulance.

During this very anxious period we had full support from the medical teams, the Paramedicals and security and I am glad to report he has now fully recovered and is back at work, thanks to their help and professionalism.

Our sincere thanks from all his family and boxing club members.

On a lighter note, good luck to Q Shillingford when he leaves the service shortly. We have been on opposite corners on many occasions (as coaches of course I'm a couple of decisions ahead of him)!

Lastly to the ratings for their very impressive no 3s – it's a smarter rig than in my day.

– Brian 'Taffy' Noblett,
former POAMA/L Pilots Mate,
Senior Coach Lewsey ABC,
Dunstable, Bedfordshire

Speedy Braves

I READ with interest Lt Cdr's Upton's letter (July) about Fast Patrol Boats.

I served in a former squadron in the 1960s (1st FPBS) comprising HMS Brave Borderer, Brave Swordsman, Dark Intruder, and Dark Gladiator.

The 'Braves' were a direct descendant from HMS Bold Pathfinder, and were all built by Vospers in about 1959.

The Brave Class were of light alloy construction, length 99ft, beam 25.5ft, displacement 75-100 tons, complement 23-28.

They were powered by three Rolls-Royce Proteus gas turbines feeding three screws through three V8 direct drive gearboxes. Auxiliary power was supplied by two Rover diesel AC generators with 24V DC emergency battery backup.

The propulsion of 10.500 HP gave these vessels a speed of well over 50 knots. The two 'Braves' broke the water speed record from Oslo in Norway to Cologne when we were ordered to present at very short notice a British/NATO escort for the funeral of the West German Chancellor Dr Konrad Adenauer.

If there is anyone out there who can remember Brave Borderer breaking her back off Plymouth and nearly foundering, I would be pleased to hear from you. I was the LRO(G) on board during the incident.

– Michael John Padginton,
former 1st Fast Patrol Boat Squadron,
Brighton, Sussex

opinion

HOW many of the British public realise that since 1969 there has not been a single minute when a Royal Navy submarine was not on nuclear deterrent patrol somewhere in the world?

It is an awe-inspiring thought that HMS Vengeance has just completed the Submarine Service's 300th nuclear deterrent patrol.

Her return marked more than 38 years of continuous at-sea deployment for the Faslane-based boats which form our nuclear capability and the UK's greatest insurance policy.

The nature of the submarine service – silent, stealthy, and invisibly deployed for months on end – makes publicising its work almost a contradiction-in-terms.

Not that most submariners would seek the limelight.

This famously eccentric breed of men endure months of isolation from friends and family, cheerfully carrying out the challenging but extremely repetitive demands of life on patrol without expecting much public recognition.

Up to a point this lack of publicity enhances the mystique of the Silent Service.

But such a milestone as the 300th patrol could not go unrecognised, so it was fitting that the submarine HMS Vengeance was welcomed on her return by the Secretary of State for Defence and the First Sea Lord.

Many of the crew of HMS Vengeance were not even born in 1968, so an awesome responsibility is placed on their young shoulders.

No greater tribute could be paid to their professionalism, and that of the generations before them since 1969, than the Government's commitment to a new generation of Royal Navy submarines to carry our country's nuclear deterrent.

The views expressed in Navy News *do not necessarily reflect those of the Ministry of Defence*

NAVY NEWS
Leviathan Block, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH
No.637: 54th year

Editorial
Editor: Sarah Fletcher
Deputy Editor: Mike Gray
Assistant Editors: Richard Hargreaves, Helen Craven
☎ 023 9229 4228
☎ 9380 24163 (Mil)
Fax 023 9283 8845
e-mail: edit@navynews.co.uk

Business
Subscriptions 023 9273 4448
e-mail: subscriptions@navynews.co.uk
Accounts 023 9272 0686
Advertising 023 9272 5062 or 023 9275 6951
e-mail: advertising@navynews.co.uk
Distribution 023 9282 9065
Fax 023 9283 0149





● *A Gannet Search and Rescue Sea King, photographed by the CO of the unit*

Gannet holds her own

I WAS disappointed to read the caption (July, page 41) beneath WO1 Ian Arthur's photo of a Search and Rescue Sea King. It implied that this was an aircraft from 771 Naval Air Squadron.

In fact since the decommissioning of 819 Squadron in December 2001 the Sea Kings based at Prestwick have never been attached to 771 NAS.

As Commanding Officer I am in the unique position of having three naval aircraft in my charge without any squadron number or affiliation.

Although HMS Gannet is parented for some aspects by RNAS Culdrose, Gannet SAR Flight (GSF) is an independent unit and has no connection with 771 NAS whatsoever.

Occasionally one may see Prestwick-based aircraft sporting 771 'Ace of Clubs' logo but this is only due to the fact that RN SAR helicopters come from a pool and some of those have 771's livery painted on them.

These cannot easily be removed before being dispatched for use at Prestwick. For the spotters amongst your readers, the small saltire painted on the nose of the aircraft is an easy way to identify one of Gannet's helicopters.

Now that I have educated all the *Navy News* readers all that remains for me is to convince the national media that not all helicopter rescues are the work of the RAF and that some (in fact historically nearly 25 per cent) are conducted by the Royal Navy.

As I write this, Gannet SAR has been the busiest UK SAR unit in the country so far this year, having conducted 171 rescues.

– Lt Cdr Roger Stringer, Commanding Officer, Gannet SAR,

Pensioners be aware

NAVAL pensioners abroad beware, the spin doctors at Westminster have decided to reward your former diligence by deducting handling charges from your pension, effective from April 2007, without prior notice.

Your paying authority, when contacted, will inform you the amount they share with Citibank to perform this hitherto free service. I will be checking on the legality of this.

– Michael 'Spike' Sullivan, Manilla, Australia

Tim Taylor, from the Service Personnel and Veterans' Agency, told *Navy News*: *"All Armed Forces pensions are paid on behalf of the MOD by Xafinity Paymaster. In January Xafinity Paymaster changed the provider of their overseas payments to Citigroup.*

Until then, all overseas bank payments incurred a charge of £2.25 which was deducted at source and had been at this rate for at least five years. Following a review, Xafinity Paymaster decided to increase the charge to £2.60, an increase of 35 pence.

The MOD believes that this represents a very modest increase after five years without change and remains good value.

Veterans who live in certain countries where information was required by Xafinity Paymaster before the crucial date were informed by a personal letter of this change. However, in the light of the very small increase in the charge it was decided not to write directly to the 11,000 affected members around the world, but inform them via their annual newsletter.

All Armed Forces pensioners living abroad have the option to have their pension paid electronically into a local overseas bank account, paid by UK sterling cheque or into their UK bank account.

It is only those who choose to have their pension paid into their overseas account that incur the administrative charge – all other methods are free.

I hope this reassures all our pensioners that the MOD continues to work hard with its suppliers to minimise the cost of pension administration."

LETTERS to the editor should always be accompanied by the correspondent's name and address, not necessarily for publication.

E-mail correspondents are also requested to provide this information.

Letters cannot be submitted over the telephone.

Given the impressive volume of letters, we cannot publish all of your correspondence in Navy News.

We look particularly for correspondence which stimulates debate, makes us laugh or raises important issues.

Please try to keep your submissions as brief as possible – our space is limited.

The editor reserves the right to edit your submissions.





around the branches

CHATHAM branch has presented a replacement plaque to the Universities at Medway to commemorate a World War 1 bombing.

The plaque marks the place where two bombs from a German Gotha aircraft came through the roof of the Drill Shed at HMS Pembroke on September 3 1917, killing more than 130 ratings as they slept.

The Drill Hall is now the library for the site, jointly owned and operated by the Universities of Greenwich and Kent, and the plaque was unveiled by branch chairman S/M John Wigley.

MEMBERS of **Market Harborough** branch joined colleagues from the Royal British Legion and the RAF Association to celebrate Veterans Day with lunch at the Angel Hotel in the town.

During the meal music from the 1940s was played, and there was a singalong afterwards.

A GRANT of £7,590 from the Awards for All England scheme will allow shipmates from **Wetherby** branch to tour naval heritage and historical sites in the South of England.

Branch chairman Fred Wake said: "We are delighted to receive this award, which will enable members, at limited cost, to visit the sites in Portsmouth which some have not seen since their Service days."

Proposed visits include the Historic Dockyard, the RN Submarine Museum, Explosion!, the D-Day Museum and the Royal Marines Museum, as well as Osborne House on the Isle of Wight.

HARWICH and District branch were the proud recipients of a Bosun's Call donated by honorary member S/M Rosemarie Quaintance, widow of S/M Jack Quaintance.

Jack was secretary of the branch until his death in March last year, by which stage he had been a member for some 20 years.

The call is displayed in a case specially built by S/M Paul Catton, and contains Jack's Full and Life Membership lapel badges.

FOUR members of **Burgess Hill** branch – Dave Lingard, Fred Reynolds, Ted Chapman and John Mead – braved difficult conditions to raise more than £100 for the Seafarers Association.

Their tombola stall at the Scaynes Hill Village Day needed 'Sloped Awnings' and extra moorings, but in addition to raising cash their efforts also led to the recruitment of a new member.

SHIPMATES from **Norwich** branch joined the congregation at Thorpe Hamlet St Matthew's Church to celebrate Sea Sunday.

Sea Cadets from TS Lord Nelson in Norwich also attended, and they and the RNA paraded their standards.

The service was conducted by Canon Graham Drake, vicar of St Matthew's and chaplain to the branch, and the address was given by Mrs M Rowland, lay reader and wife of branch chairman S/M Graham Rowland.

THE **Scottish Area** has obtained a pitch at one of the biggest Highland Games of the summer.

Members will set out their stall at the Crieff Highland Games on Sunday August 19, when they hope to spread the word about the RNA and the RN to crowds of up to 7,000 people from across the world.

around the branches



● *Derrick Denyer of the HMS Aurora Association at the Maritime Club in Portsmouth*

New day dawns for Aurora

A WORLD War 2 cruiser has stepped back out of the shadows as her supporters ensure her name lives on.

HMS Aurora was an Arethusa-class cruiser of 5,270 tons, launched in 1936 and which was in the thick of the action throughout the war.

She started in the Norwegian campaign, seeking the Scharnhorst, then joined the hunt for the Bismarck.

She was part of Force K cold northern seas, and then became part of the Mediterranean Force K, playing a leading role in the destruction of an Italian convoy in November 1941.

Damaged in the minefield which sank HMS Neptune and HMS Kandahar, she was quickly repaired and back in action, taking part in the Torch landings in North Africa, landings in Sicily and Salerno and the liberation of Athens.

In 1948 she was sold to the Chinese Navy, and in 1949 she defected to the Communists – and was promptly sunk by Nationalist air attacks, though she was later salvaged.

She is believed to have been scrapped in 1960.

Some of her ship's company kept in touch with each other, and an association was formed which met annually at the Home Club – now the Maritime Club – in Portsmouth.

A picture of their cruiser hung on a balcony, and members decided that a ship's crest and a history of the Aurora would complete the display.

Derrick Denyer, who was a teenaged boy signalman in Aurora from 1941 to 1943, presented the crest and history to the club.

Mr Denyer said the association was still going strong, despite the fact that with a Navy career of less than ten years and a ship's company of only 600 there are not too many to draw from.

Mr Denyer, at 83, is one of the youngest, and he sends out two association news letters a year, and at its peak the association could attract 100 or more into their annual reunion in Portsmouth.

The picture of the ship, along with Mr Denyer's potted history and the ship's crest, are due to be moved to a more prominent position in the club shortly.



● *S/M Doug Shingler*

Ex-Tiffy elected mayor

THE chairman of **Northwich and District** branch has swapped uniform for robes after being elected Mayor of Vale Royal.

S/M Doug Shingler spent 29 years in the Fleet Air Arm after joining at HMS Fisgard in 1962.

He went on to serve as a helicopter engineer at RN Air Stations Culdrose, Portland and Yeovilton and on aircraft carriers deployed worldwide, retiring as a CPO in 1991 – at which point he joined the Association.

He also worked with the RN Historic Flight.

On leaving the Navy Doug became a facilities manager in the North West before retiring – but that brought more responsibility in the shape of civic office; Doug was elected a councillor in 2003, and is also a parish councillor, governor of as high school and a mmeber of a church choir.

His wife Pam, who is his Mayoress, served with the Wrens as an education officer before pursuing a career as a teacher.

New home for Kingston

MEMBERSHIP of the **Kingston** branch stands at 114 members – including seven currently serving in the RN.

But the 45 shipmates who attended the branch AGM were also told that, like other branches, Kingston has an ageing cohort, and not many shipmates come forward to serve on the committee.

Branch chairman for 14 years, S/M Len Stokes, has had to retire through ill health – Len and secretary S/M Gordon Tucker were responsible for ensuring the branch went from strength to strength after recommissioning in 1984.

As a result of the AGM S/M Gordon Tucker was appointed chairman as well as secretary, as there was no other nominee – a new deputy secretary was appointed to help him.

In June the branch came in for a shock – Kingston Royal British Legion club gave notice the club was closing for business forthwith, and the RNA had to find a new berth.

Fortunately, the treasurer found a new home at the Kingston Working Mens Club, where June's meeting was held.

Pride and sadness

ALMOST 60 standards were paraded and more than 200 shipmates marched at the Sunday Church Parade on the last day of National Conference weekend in Torquay.

As the band which should have led the parade was missing, the column was led by a small, determined group of percussionists

So popular was the event that it was standing room only inside the church for the service itself.

The weekend concluded with entertainment laid on by the **Torbay** branch at the local RAF Association Club.

On a sad note, S/M Melvin Rand, Welfare Officer of **Spennymoor and Ferryhill** branch, died on the evening before the Conference itself at the first social event of the weekend, and the Association's officers have sent their condolences to Mrs Rand and her family.

Tribute to the RN fallen



● *Cdr David Hobbs at the Collingwood Act of Remembrance at Blandford*

A MEMORIAL service for the infantry sailors of World War 1 drew hundreds to Blandford Camp in Dorset.

The Collingwood Act of Remembrance has been organised for the past 57 years by Roy Adam in honour of the Collingwood Battalion of the Royal Naval Division.

The RND, which fought inland campaigns as part of the British Expeditionary Force, was made up of sailors who were waiting in RN Barracks to be assigned to a ship – but ended up in the trenches.

Roy, whose father fought in Benbow Battalion of the RND, is a founder member of **Blandford** branch, and said the attendance list this year was excellent, including representatives from Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the United States, UK Armed Forces and veterans' groups.



● *A reunion of four old shipmates after 45 years has led to a thriving 24-strong association which aims to mark the 50th anniversary next year of their commission in HMS Alert. "We are all getting towards our sell-by date so we need a bit of help to find the rest of the 1958-60 commission while we can still do something about it," said ex-AB Dodger Long. If anyone would like to join the group, all RNA members, they should contact S/M Long on 01323 891389 or email davlev30@talktalk.net*

Air station visited

MEMBERS of **Bourne** branch paid a visit to an RAF station to meet some Royal Navy personnel.

The 14 shipmates travelled to the Joint Harrier base at RAF Wittering, where they had a good look behind the scenes.

They were shown a film outlining the history of the base, then saw a Harrier practising take-offs and landings on the runway in front of the control tower.

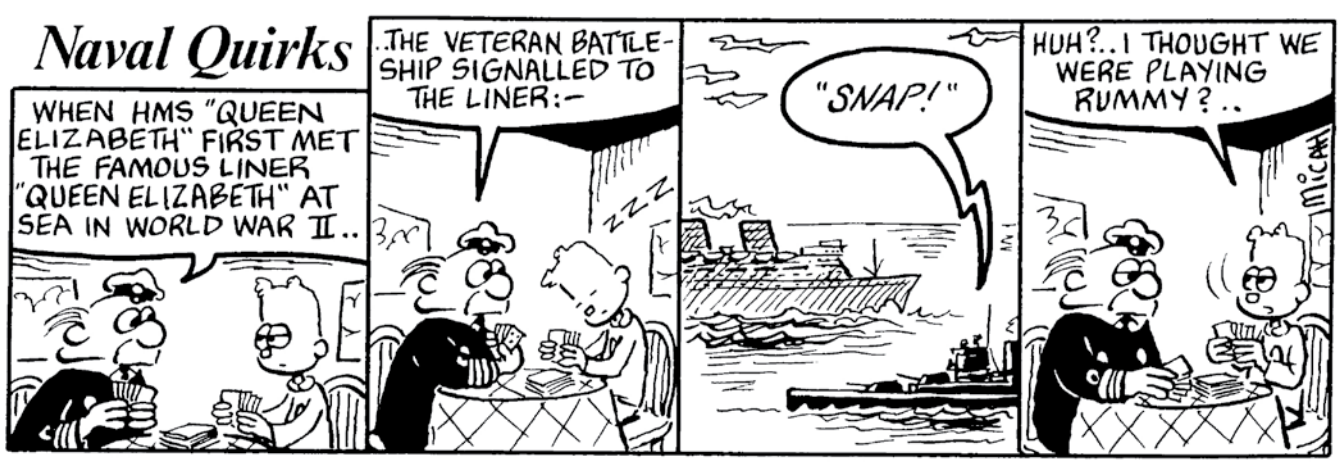
In the tower the visitors met and talked to weather experts and flight commanders, and could watch the Harrier activity on the air base.

Other aerial activity over a much wider area was revealed by peering at the control tower's radar screens.

Following lunch in the Officers' Mess, where they were joined by several Royal Navy personnel, the visitors toured Harrier workshops, taking the chance to try the pilot's seat for size, then were given a full explanation of how ejector seats work and how survival packs work.

S/M Brenda White, Bourne branch secretary, said: "This was a great opportunity to swap yarns and relate to the modern-day Royal Navy and the way in which both RAF and RN personnel integrate to put best practice to the forefront.

"RNA Bourne branch thanks all those serving, including civilians, for an informative, educational and interesting tour."



History lesson on role of the RND

THE Battle of the Somme is commemorated every year in Northern Ireland, the main event being held on July 1 in Belfast – the date of the start of the bloody campaign.

District commemorations take place on the Sunday preceding, and during the preparations for one such event National Council member for **No 12 Area (Ireland)** S/M Ivan Hunter was asked why the RN was taking part in what was considered an Army event.

He explained that in addition to remembering the 5,000 Ulstermen who died on the first day of the battle, and to standing alongside comrades from the other Services, the Navy has good reason to be there.

Ever since the RN was formed, Naval Brigades have gone ashore to fight land battles, and in 1914 the idea of the RN Brigade was taken further and the RN Division formed.

Initially the Division consisted of men waiting in barracks for a ship to join, supplemented by reservists – men trained to fight at sea who instead found themselves fighting in the mud and trenches of the Somme and elsewhere.

The sacrifice of the Division at the Somme and other battles can be seen in the region today – Tyne Cot cemetery alone, near Ypres, in Belgium, has a memorial to more than 200 sailors who have no known graves.

The RN Division – redesignated the 63rd (Royal Naval) Division in 1916 – was disbanded in 1920.

S/M Hunter, along with **East Antrim** branch colleagues Gwen Corry (vice chairman), Peter Corry (standard bearer) and Joe McWilliams (PRO/Welfare), represented the Association at the County Antrim memorial service at the war memorial in Knockagh.



● *Standards are paraded at the Woking branch Veterans Day event, which also marked the 25th anniversary of the Falklands Conflict*

Woking honours the South Atlantic fallen

WOKING branch celebrated Veterans Day with a parade through the town, not only to mark the day of recognition but also to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Falklands Conflict.

The parade assembled outside Boots the Chemist, with 21 standards from local veterans organisations and many ex-Service personnel who came to lend their support.

Some came from as far as Greenwich to take part in the service and march-past.

The Gordon School band ably led the parade into the Town Square, watched by a large crowd.

The chaplain of the Woking branch, the Rev Barry Grimster, conducted the service at the war memorial, which was followed by the Last Post, the Exhortation, the Kohima Prayer and the Reveille.

The Mayor of Woking, Cllr Bryan Cross, laid a wreath in memory of the men who died in the Falklands Conflict.

This was followed by a wreath laid on behalf of the RNA in memory of all shipmates and Royal Marines who died in the fighting in the South Atlantic.

Finally a Combined Services wreath was laid in memory of all veterans who lost their lives in all conflicts.

Following a moving service, the Mayor of Woking took the salute at the march-past, with the procession making its way through the town back to the Railway Club, where refreshments were made available to all those veterans who took part.

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE





THE mystery – even enigmatic – ship in our June edition (right) was HMS Fidelity, which was sunk off the Azores by U-435.

The £50 prize goes to J Garvie of Woodbridge in Suffolk.

This month's ship (above) was sold to an Asian navy in the early 1990s and is still around today – with a name familiar to the RN minesweeper community of the not-too-distant past.

We want to know her name when she was in the RFA flotilla, and her name now. The correct answers could win you £50.

Complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH. Coupons giving correct answers will go into a prize draw to establish a winner.

Closing date for entries is September 14. More than one entry can be submitted, but photocopies cannot be accepted. Do not include anything else in your envelope: no correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned.

The winner will be announced in our October edition. The competition is not open to Navy News employees or their families.

MYSTERY PICTURE 150

Name

Address

.....

.....

My answers

.....

Castle still stands

FORMER HMS St George 'old boys' may be interested to see the last surviving building of the camp which they once knew so well.

J Galt served at the Isle of Man establishment as a boy from March 1940 until June 1941 – one of some 8,000 who passed through its gates.

The land, at Douglas, was once occupied by Cunningham's Holiday Camp; the camp was founded in 1904 but the castle celebrates its centenary this year.

The castle stands at the foot of the one-time parade ground, and was reputed to be where boys caught smoking were given six cuts of the cane.

The building bears the war memorial to those of HMS St George who died in World War 2, in the form of a brass plaque.

The staff of a nearby office, ILS Group, decided to give the old castle a clean-up, and set to it with paint brushes.

Two women promised to take over the job of cleaning the plaque – relieving S/M Galt of a self-imposed duty he has undertaken for the past 20 years or so.



● *The castle at the former HMS St George*

Final donation

THE winding-up of a ship association has provided a welcome boost to the coffers of a charity.

The **HMS Bigbury Bay Association** was forced to close after members found it difficult to attend reunions.

Club treasurer Ron Hale has now sent a cheque for £486.05 – the final amount in the association's bank account – to the Royal Naval Benevolent Trust.

Altmark survivor is guest

THE Guest of Honour at the 16th annual reunion of the **HMS Cossack Association** in Worthing was Noel Bevan, believed to be the sole surviving prisoner rescued during the Altmark incident.

He was able to relate the story of the Merchant Navy personnel who were transferred to Altmark as prisoners when their ships were sunk by the Graf Spee.

He could also give a first-hand account of the famous boarding of the Altmark, to the cry "The Navy's here!", by sailors from HMS Cossack to release the captives.

2010 will represent 70 years since the incident, and the Association has started planning for a notable remembrance event.

Coincidentally, the guest speaker at the AGM was the officer-in-charge of the Board and Search Unit at HMS Raleigh, whose training building is named after Cossack.

If anyone has any information or ideas that could be considered in the planning for 2010 could they contact the Association secretary on 01252 613052, or see website www.hmscossack.org

Contact with any members of the ship's companies of either L03 or D57 would also be appreciated.

Wartime destroyer database is online

A DATABASE of all destroyer men lost during World War 2 has been placed on the HMS Cavalier website.

The initial labour of love was undertaken by Eric Smith, of Polperro in Cornwall.

The fact that HMS Cavalier, in Chatham Historic Dockyard, is a memorial to the men lost during that war prompted members of the HMS Cavalier Association to convert the documents into a computer database which was searchable.

HMS Cavalier Association chairman Barry Knell said: "We wanted it to be free and accessible, particularly for people searching for details of relatives.

"It may also be useful for veterans trying to locate details of their lost oppos."

Eric lent his written records for several months while members of the HMS Cavalier Association converted the data for nearly 11,000 records.

This has now been put on to the www.hmscavalier.org.uk website by webmaster Ron Rymer.

The search engine is on the left-hand side of the home page and is designed to be user-friendly.

You can enter a search on any forename, surname or name of ship, and having obtained a match the site will display the age, rank, awards, ship name and where he was lost or is buried.

By clicking on the line underneath you will get a link which shows a picture of the ship, her details and history, as well as the latitude and longitude where she was lost or now lies.

Other search parameters include entering a ship name to get a complete list of all those lost with her.

Harrogate pays visit to Ypres

MEMBERS of **Harrogate and District** branch travelled to Belgium to visit World War 1 battlefields and the European Parliament, thanks to a £5,000 lottery grant from Awards for All which helped cover travel and accommodation costs.

The group met Yorkshire MEPs for a short question-and-answer session at the European Parliament in Brussels.

Then it was off to Ypres, where they visited the In Flanders Field museum. They also toured a number of battlefields.

At the Essex Farm cemetery there is a memorial to the Yorkshire West Riding Division, as a number of soldiers are buried there, and the group also saw the recently-discovered Yorkshire Trench and Dug-out, unearthed during excavations for a new business park.

Finally the group attended the poignant Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate on the edge of Ypres city centre.

S/M Fred Thompson proudly paraded the British Standard and S/M Doug Pointon, escorted by S/Ms David Girt and Tony Edwards, laid a poppy wreath.

Secretary Doug Pointon said: "Everyone enjoyed the trip and many commented on how moved they were, some to tears, at the cemeteries."

Name added

MEMBERS of **Bolton** branch have attended a ceremony at the Dunscar War Memorial near the town to honour the memory of John Stroud, killed aboard HMS Glamorgan during the Falklands Conflict.

John's name was added to the memorial at a ceremony also attended by Chorley Sea Cadets, of which John was once a member.

PEOPLE



● *The Duke of Edinburgh meets with Royal Marines of 3 Commando Brigade at Stonehouse Barracks*
Picture: PO(Phot) Dave Husbands

A proud day for the Marines

THE NEW batch of operational honours has brought 39 awards for gallantry and meritorious service for personnel of 3 Commando Brigade.

The Brigade covered itself in glory in heated battle against the Taleban in Afghanistan, and the Royal Marines and fellow soldiers from their allied Army units were recognised in the honours announced on July 19.

The awards which cover all the operational and active theatres of service for the military included two Distinguished Service Orders, one Conspicuous Gallantry Cross, ten Military Crosses and two Queen's Gallantry Medals (*for the list in full, see right*).

The Duke of Edinburgh – the Captain General of the Royal Marines – met several of those receiving honours at the Stonehouse Barracks on the day before the announcement.

Brig David Capewell, Commander of 3 Commando Brigade, spoke about his brigade's deployment to Afghanistan that ended earlier this year: "The operation was characterised by an intensity probably not seen since the Korean War.

"The awards bear testimony to the magnificent performance of the Commando Brigade."

Among those receiving an award is Mne Matthew Bispham of 42 Commando, who was recognised for his "fighting spirit, resolve and unflinching courage "in action in Afghanistan less than three months after receiving his green beret.

When told about his Military Cross, Matthew – known as Bish to his oppos – said he was 'gobsmacked'.

"It is humbling to work with lads who are willing to fight and die next to you.

"They become part of your family and it makes everything you do worthwhile."

He added: "Every man I served with deserves recognition in my eyes."

FAA farewell to Tugg

FAMILY and friends of the cartoonist Tugg – Lt Cecil Willson – packed the small church of St Bartholomew's, in Yeovilton, for a service on June 8 to celebrate his life and achievements.

Tugg, who died last year aged 76, spent his Naval career as an armourer in the Fleet Air Arm, but it was his artistic talents which brought him fame and recognition throughout the Naval Service and beyond.

His widow, Elizabeth Willson, with their three sons and other family, joined Tugg's former friends and colleagues for the service, which was taken by Father Graeme Elmore, RN, and hosted by Vice Admiral Adrian Johns in his capacity as Rear Admiral Fleet Air Arm.

Numbers for the service were limited because of the size of St Bartholomew's, now the Fleet Air Arm Memorial Church, but many of Tugg's former colleagues attended to hear tributes from his former colleagues.

Vice Admiral Johns told the assembled guests that Tugg's famous flight safety cartoons were known to have a wonderful effect on morale, bringing a sense of proportion and humour to the most challenging of situations.

Lt Cdr Harry O'Grady raised much laughter when he remembered Tugg's role as a leading light in the Fleet Air Arm's 'Fight Tights' campaign, following the infamous DCI which announced that no more black stockings were to be issued to Wrens. It had, he said, a devastating effect on morale.

The service was followed by a fly-past of a Sea Fury, Hawks and helicopters, and a reception at the Fleet Air Arm Museum with a display of Tugg's work.

Among the other guests were Vice Admiral Sir Edward Anson and Rear Admiral Terry Loughran, as well as the Commanding Officers of RNAS Yeovilton and RNAS Culdrose, and Cdre Jerry Stanford, Commodore Fleet Air Arm.

TUGG.

NOTICEBOARD

Operational Honours

Operational Honours and Awards, July 19 2007

AFGHANISTAN

Member of the Order of British Empire – Maj Oliver Andrew Lee RM, Lt Col Ewen Murchison RM, WO2 Martin Charles Reeves RM

Distinguished Service Order – Lt Col Matthew John Holmes RM, Brig Jeremy Hywel Thomas RM

Associate Royal Red Cross – Lt Frank Kelly QARNNS

Conspicuous Gallantry Cross – Cpl John Thomas Thompson Royal Marines

Military Cross – Mne Matthew Bispham RM, Mne Daniel Claricoates RM, Cpl Michael Cowe RM, Mne Ian Paul Danby RM, Mne Daniel Fisher RM, Cpl Alan Hewitt RM, Sgt Jason Layton RM, Cpl Simon Willey RM

Mention in Despatches – Capt Alistair Scott Carns RM, Mne Thomas Curry RM (killed in action), Capt Duncan Graham Forbes RM, Maj Philip Gadie RM, Mne Jonathan Paul Hart RM, Mne Alexander Hoole RM, WO2 Robert Daniel Jones RM, Cpl Adam Lison RM, Mne Paul Mayfield RM, Capt Jason Robert Milne RM, Cpl Ashley Oates RM, 2Lt Richard Sharp RM, WO2 Steven Shepherd RM, Mne Matthew Smith RM

Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service – Maj Matthew Churchward RM, Lt Col Duncan Andrew Dewar RM, Lt Col Charles Richard Stickland RM

IRAQ

Military Cross – Capt James Knight RM, Cpl Terry Robert Knights RM

Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service – Lt Cdr Richard Henry McHugh

NATIONAL OPERATIONS

Officer of the Order of the British Empire – Cdr Stafford Allan Seward

Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service – Sgt Wayne Hunt RM

NON-COMBATANT GALLANTRY

Queen's Gallantry Medal – POACMN James Brendan O'Donnell

Queen's Commendation for Bravery in the Air – Lt Guy Patrick Norris, Lt Cdr Martin James Rhodes



NAVY NEWS
www.navynews.co.uk

YES, I would like to subscribe to Navy News
(please refer to the table opposite for prices)
Send the completed form and payment to:

Subscriptions,
Navy News, HMS Nelson,
Queen Street, Portsmouth
Hampshire PO1 3HH, England
Tel: +44 023 9273 4448 (24hr answerphone)
email: subscriptions@navynews.co.uk

1. COMPLETE YOUR DETAILS

Name
Address
Postcode Country
Phone Number
Email

2. CHOOSE YOUR SUBSCRIPTION 08/07

Region	Years	Rate	Tick
UK	One	£20.50	
UK	Two	£37.00	
UK	Three	£55.00	
Overseas*	One	£24.50	
Overseas*	Two	£43.00	
Overseas*	Three	£62.50	

*Overseas Surface Mail including Republic of Ireland, Europe, Canada, USA & Australia. *(Airmail rates available on request)*

3. COMPLETE YOUR PAYMENT DETAILS

I enclose
Cheque **Postal Order** **IMO**
in £ Sterling made payable to '**Navy News**'
I wish to pay by
Visa **Mastercard** **Delta** **Switch/Solo**
Payment Amount £
Credit Card orders cannot be accepted under £5.00
Card Number
Start Date Expiry Date Issue No. CSC No.
Signature Date
This is a
New subscription Renewed subscription
Start my subscription from month

Due to administration costs, a refund cannot be given if the subscription is cancelled during the first six months, and thereafter would be subject to a £5.00 admin charge.

THE TIME OF YOUR LIVES

NAVY NEWS looks back through its pages to recall some of the August headlines of past decades...



● *Echoes in the past – destroyer HMS Newcastle takes to the sea for her first sea trials*

40 years ago

AN ARTIST'S impression graced the back page of August 1967, headlined the 'New destroyer of the seventies'.

It was the Type 82 destroyer, of which in fact only one was built. And she is still in service with the Royal Navy, although she doesn't go too far nowadays – HMS Bristol.

30 years ago

ANOTHER decade, another new destroyer – Type 42 HMS Newcastle, in build at Wallsend, goes to sea for the first time on contractors' sea trials, just as this month we celebrate as Type 45 HMS Daring begins her sea trials on the Clyde. The Type 42 decommissioned in February 2005.

20 years ago

AWAY from the world of new destroyers, it was another kind of virgin territory that sparked attention in 1987 – frigate HMS Argonaut went to the rescue of Richard Branson and Per Lindstrand after their balloon, the Virgin Flyer, ditched into the Irish Sea during their attempted transatlantic crossing.

NOTICEBOARD ENTRIES

■ Notices for this page should be brief, clearly written or typed and addressed to – The Editor, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth. PO1 3HH or email: edit@navynews.co.uk. If you are sending your notice in via email, please include your full address and telephone number.
■ Reunions appear in date order, and requests to place an entry in a particular edition cannot be guaranteed.
■ Please send in Reunions at least three months (preferably four) before the month of the event.
■ There may be a delay before items appear, due to the volume of requests.
■ Entries are free to non-commercial organisations. Items pertaining to commercial work, books and publications for profit can only appear as paid-for advertising.
■ The Editor reserves the right to edit or refuse publication of submitted notices.
■ Space does not allow us to accept more than one free insert. Any subsequent notice will have to be paid for at advertising rates.

NOTICEBOARD

Where are you now?

HMS Andromeda: Looking for **Jeffrey 'Big Wiggy' Bennett** and brother **Anthony 'Little Wiggy'** who served on Andromeda in 1975-76. Contact David 'Dusty' Miller LOEM at Tracey@accounteract.fsnet.co.uk or tel: 07812 377581 or write to 20 Fleck Avenue, Saltcoats, Ayreshire, Scotland, KA21 6LJ.

HMS Cardiff: Trying to contact the officers and crew of HMS Cardiff from the Falklands conflict 1982, we were captained by M G T Harris and 1st Lt was Mike Johnson. A message to **all** of the serving officers and crew of the Cardiff at that time, that a reunion with SAMA Wales group will be held in the autumn (September 30) and quite a few of the ship's company have already indicated from the London event that they will attend. Contact Rod Meadows by e-mail at RodMeadows008@aol.com or tel: 01329 661070.

HMS Eagle: Looking for **Timothy 'Taff' Evans** of 4K1 Mess (1964-65), **David 'Taff' Jones**, Stoker of 5P2 Mess (1966-67) and **Dave Miles**, Steward (1965) all from HMS Eagle. Contact Tony Francis at antnette@mac.com or write to PO Box 357, Derby, Western Australia, 6728, Australia.

Fisher Mess, RNAS Yeovilton 1949: Reunion for Skilled Air Mechanics and Pilots Mates of Fisher Mess. Names already collected: Woolston, Venables, Patrick, Stolworthy, Clifford, Swann. Details from Alan Clifford on 01548 580848.

RN Engineroom Association: The RNEA (Sweatrags Club) is nationwide and open to all past and present engineroom personnel of all ranks. Based at the Nautical Club, Birmingham, it hosts a monthly meeting: Christmas party; formal annual dinner/dance and an annual reunion; plus other functions and ship visits etc. There is a monthly newsletter. Contact the membership secretary at gerald.sedgley@blueyonder.co.uk or tel: 0121 689 3886.

HMS Ganges: Seeking **Ken Turnham** who joined Ganges on February 6, 1950, Blake Division, Class 66. He was from Hammersmith at that time. Later went on to serve in Vanguard and Corunna. Five members of Class 66 are in touch and we would like to find more. Contact Jack Rochester on 01263 732333.

HMS Intrepid – Falklands 1982: Following on from meeting a few old comrades at the London 25 year anniversary, we are now looking to set up a forum and reunion for shipmates serving on Intrepid during the Falklands, in particular the WEM(R) or WEM(O) branches. Please contact Chris Stanton, (ex LWEM(R)), at chris.stanton@welcomm.co.uk or tel: 07860 227786.

HMS Loch Fada: In the absence of any muster lists, we are trying to compile a register of anyone who served in her during her life-span, 1944-67: WW2, Londonderry, Persian Gulf or Far East. To date we have some almost complete lists, but also have some very large gaps. Can you help fill them? Who were your messmates on whatever commission? Who else can you remember? Contact Bob Harris at bobharrisf390@supanet.com or tel: 023 8039 1848.

HMS London: Trying to find LS(R) **Stephen 'Shifty' Carter** who left the RN in 1998 after 25 years. His last ship was HMS London and was believed to be working part time down the Med for a security firm. Any info on his location would be appreciated. Also looking for **Dave Morris,** an OM(1) on HMS Chatham in 1993 having served in the Army before that. Contact Les Quinan at theboyquinan@talk21.com or tel: 07706 905635 or write to 18 Bramley Road, Polegate, East Sussex, BN26 6JS.

Lossiemouth: Pip and Kate Brown (living in Cyprus) are searching for **Nicholas James Gooldon Grant Batchelor**. They served together in the RN and were based at Lossiemouth 1970-71. You can contact them through Tom and Joyce White at Ystrad Y Fodwg Cottage, Old Penrhys Road, Ystrad, Pentre, CF41 7ST or tel: 01443 434293.

Malta 1952: Could **John Storey** who served in the RN Stores section in Malta at the same time as Geoffrey Andrews, please contact Geoffrey's son on 0151 342 5063.

HMS Pembroke: In the POs mess in Nelson Block was a ship's wheel on the wall of the bar. Does anyone remember the origins of that wheel? Derek was fortunate enough to obtain the wheel when the artefacts in the mess were auctioned off, just prior to closure. He has photographs of the buildings and would like to hear from anyone who remembers him. Contact Derek Filmer at dgfilmer@tiscali.co.uk or tel: 01622 631242 or write to 11 Aldington Road, Bearsted, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 4AN.

Royal Navy Physical Training Branch Association: After a successful reunion in Portsmouth in June attended by 83 members, the association is seeking more 'clubswingers'. Contact CPOPT 'Bill' Bailey, CSI, RNSPT, HMS Temeraire, Burnaby Road, Portsmouth PO1 2HB or e-mail temci@a.dii.mod.uk for further details.

HMS Quorn: The Executive Officer of the present HMS Quorn is trying to contact surviving members, or relatives, of the ship's company of HMS Quorn sunk off the Normandy beaches in 1944 in order to hold a commemoration service sometime in late October this year (date either October 21 or 22) at the CWGC Cemetery in Northern France where their shipmates are buried. As far as we are aware there is no Quorn Association. Please contact Lt Cdr S D Walton at 366-xo@a.dii.mod.uk or tel: 07720 435808 or write to HMS Quorn, BFPO 366, London.

HMS Torquay: In November 1966, Torquay was on a visit to Marseille, France. Michael is seeking two former crew members from that visit. One is the Officer of the Watch (name not known) who came from Blackburn, Lancs, and a rating **'Clubs' Joneston** or **Jonestone** who was a South African serving in the RN. Contact Michael Potter at potter909@hotmail.co.uk or tel: 01772 464462 or write to 84 The Martindales, Clayton-le-Woods, Chorley, Lancashire, PR6 7TH.

HMS Torquay: Still seeking shipmates from HMS Torquay 1982-84 with a view to arranging a reunion early next year. Please reply to Mark Hayward, 10 Kenilworth Close, Broadfield, Crawley, West Sussex, RH11 9PY.

HMS Triumph/Corunna: Seeking information and contact with **Dougie Price** or his family, former shipmate of Gilbert 'Gillie' Hartley. Gilbert (Leading Marine Mechanical Engineer), Stoker, spent most of his time in the Navy in Triumph and Corunna. It is believed that Dougie was from the Manchester area. Contact Caroline Barrow (Gilbert's daughter), 5 Derwentwater Close, Millom, Cumbria, LA18 4PF.

HMS Vernon: Seeking information regarding Temporary Lieutenant (Sp) **Charles George Lea** RNVR, who served in Vernon 1942-46. He appears to have been part of a mine clearance/disposal team, but no information regarding sea-going service. He was married to Dorothy Grace (née Cook) from the Bath area. She may have served, as a civilian, at Station X, Bletchley Park and was at one time receptionist at the Atlantic Hotel, Western-Super-Mare. At the end of 1944 she was a temporary clerk in the Cashiers department, HM Dockyard, Portsmouth. Their last known address was Western Lodge, Emsworth. They are also understood to have been friends with a naval couple (a Lt Cdr RNVR and a 3rd Officer WRNS), known only as 'The Griffs'. If you can help contact John Hughes at sygnau@tesco.net or write to him at 74 Fairacres, Prestwood, Buckinghamshire, HP16 0LF.

WRNS: Seeking nursing colleagues and wonder if you can help. In 1977 we arrived at Haslar Naval Hospital and became 'F' class on October 10 1977. This year will see our 30th anniversary since we began our training and it would be fantastic if we could all meet up again. If you are interested in this reunion contact Lorraine Leighton at l.leighton@gemini59.freeserve.co.uk or tel: 01404 46802.

Ask Jack

Cap Badge: Robert recently purchased a Naval cap badge. It is made of a brass-type metal with the anchor a silver type metal recessed in the middle. It measures 1⅝" by 2" high with a pair of arms riveted on the back to attach it to a hat-band. Can anyone offer any information? Reply to Robert Chapman, 73 Shore Road, Warsash, Southampton, Hants, SO31 9FS.

HMS Esperance Bay and LCF 34: Arthur is seeking information regarding his father, Arthur Clifford Goddard and units that he served in, namely Esperance Bay (1940-41) and LCF 34 (1945). Arthur would like to hear from anyone who served with his father at that time and also to learn about any movements. Contact Arthur Goddard on 01264 361204 or write to 57 Junction Road, Andover, Hants, SP10 3JA.

HMS Glory: Valerie is looking for any information about HMS Glory in 1946. Her father, John McJannett from Castle Douglas in Scotland, served as a stoker and took the New Zealand occupation to Kure. He travelled from the UK in Victorious and joined Glory in Melbourne, Australia, in 1946. Valerie is seeking anyone who knew him along with any details of his service. Contact Valerie Stopford (née McJannett) at david.stopford@bigpond.com or write to 13 Greenford Close, Brinsmead, Queensland, Australia.

Gunner: Seeking information about Charles Rands, a gunner in WW2. His family would like to hear from anyone who knew him to hear stories and see pictures. He joined at Collingwood in 1941 and also spent time in Victory, Excellent, Orlando, Cormorant, Philoctetes, Braganza and LSTs. Contact T Dixon, 39 Campion Court, Bellinge, Northamptonshire, NN3 9BW or tel: 01604 248749.

HMS Mahratta: Does anyone remember Able Seaman David Annear in HMS Mahratta? If so could they contact his niece, Hazel Smith at Sirenehazel@aol.com or telephone 01209 822051 or write to 4 Springfield Way, St Day, Redruth, Cornwall, TR16 5NU.

HMS Martin: Can anyone please tell me if there are any living survivors from HMS Martin which sank of the coast of Algiers on November 10, 1942. My uncle 'Jackie' John Douglas was on board. I believe he was a cook or held some catering position. It would be nice to hear from anyone who might have known him. Contact Henry Watson at Watslsb@aol.com or tel: 0131 336 2846 or write to 50 Main Street, Davidsons Mains, Edinburgh, EH45AA.

HMS Nelson: Paul's great uncle Robert Ogden died in HMS Hood. As a result of an article Paul wrote he was put in touch with a gentleman who gave him a medal that had been awarded to Robert in 1932 whilst he was in HMS Nelson. The medal is inscribed 'Kings Cup Winner, HMS Nelson – AB R Ogden 1932'. Despite many enquiries he has been unable to find what it was actually awarded for. If you can help contact Paul Ogden, Woodlands, off Rigby Street, Ashton-in-Makerfield, Wigan, WN4 9PY.

Wheel Spanner: On the trail of a wheel spanner as used by stokers. Bill left the Andrew in 1955 and the one thing that would bring back memories of a life below would be a wheel spanner. Try as he may, he has drawn a blank in his searches. If you can help, contact Bill Campbell at Bill@camp15.fsnet.co.uk or write to 45 Findon Gardens, Belfast, BT9 6QL.

HMS Vanguard: Liz' uncle Hugh McFall served in the Navy from approximately 1949-56. During this time he served in Vanguard, Victorious and Bigbury Bay amongst others. He is now deceased and his niece would like to trace anybody who has ship or group photographs which include him. She has no photographs of him at all. Any help received would be greatly appreciated. Please contact Mrs Elizabeth Dobbie at Lizdobbie@aol.com or tel: 01344 624329.

HMS Vansittart: Seeking any information and pictures of this ship which was adopted by the borough of Kidderminster in 1941. She was originally commissioned in 1919 and eventually sold in 1946. What tonnage was she? Who was her captain in the 1940s? Is there an 'Honours Board', if so where? There are many more questions. If you can help contact Roy Thatcher, 8 Birmingham Road, Blakedown, Kidderminster, Worcs, DY10 3JE or tel: 01562 700164.

Swap drafts

AB WTR Sullivan. Draft: HMS Sutherland, September 2007. **Will swap for:** any Portsmouth-based ship. **Contact:** 9380 20371.

AB(MW) Harrison. Draft: HMS Atherstone, current. **Would like to swap for:** any Hunt-class MCMV or a shore base. **Contact:** 0781 241 5571 or 215-OMMW4@a.dii.mod.uk.

Deaths

POAET Steven J Langthorp. Serving in 848 Naval Air Squadron. Ships and units included Seahawk, Daedalus, Heron, Yeovilton, 845 NAS, 707 NAS, 848 NAS, and 846 NAS. July 7.

Marine Sean Cain. 42 Commando Royal Marines. April 4.

LCpl Richard Lamb. 42 Commando Royal Marines. Road traffic accident. April 25.

Cdr T J Kinna. FAA. Flew Fireflies with 812 and 825 Naval Air Squadrons (Korea) in Glory, Ocean, Bulwark and at Ganges and Osprey. 14th Carrier Air Group Association. May (whilst on holiday in Portugal). Aged 79.

John 'Gabby' Heys. CPO. Submariner and instructor. Served 1953-76 starting as a submariner and served in Auriga then surface ships including Falmouth; finally an instructor at Collingwood and Nelson. June 21. Aged 71.

Ralph Tomes. Stoker. Served 1949-51 at Royal Arthur and in Altaunia, RNB Victory and Hornet. June 20. Aged 76.

Larry D Oxtaby. Served in Creole, Coquette and Ocean; aboard Comus 1950-52 and a member of the association. June 20. Aged 78.

Iorwerth Hughes. SBPO. Served 1938-50 then Royal Fleet Reserve until 1960 in Sheffield, Cormorant, Liverpool, Cumberland and Hermione. Sultan and RN Hospitals Pembroke and Landswell. February. Aged 88.

Ellis 'Parky' Parkinson. CPO Caterer. Joined as a boy from 1960 and served in Leander, Ark Royal, Charybdis, Euryalus, submarines and RNAS Yeovilton. February 14. Aged 62.

Maurice Daine. PO. Served in various ships including Khedive. June.

James W Goss. Served 1948-55 mostly as QM3 in Victorious, Campania, Victory, Wren, Bellerophon, Rattlesnake, Jamaica and Cleopatra. After enrolled in RFR. Naval historian, photographer and author. Books included *Nato Navies*, *British Warships*, *Spotting Warships*, *Portsmouth-built Warships* and a regular contributor to *Marine News*, *Ships Monthly*, *Warship International* and other historical publications. In 1983 he produced a special commerative boxed set of postcard photographs of all 113 ships that took part in the Falkland's campaign postmarked in Port Stanley on the 1st anniversary of the war and all profits went to the St George's Fund for Sailors. Several other works in progress that remained unpublished including histories of the Flower class corvettes and the Ton class minesweepers. Algerines Association. July 8. Aged 77.

ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION

Maurice Wood. Served in HMY Britannia for a number of years. Founder member and secretary of Knowle branch. June 1.

Frank Farrow. Bourne branch.

Lloyd Hughes. Bourne branch.

Betty Collingwood. Associate member Bourne branch.

Tom Hogan. CPO SA. Served 23 years S&S, branch mainly aircraft stores in Indefatigable, Loch Insh, Loch Fyne, Belfast, Apollo, Llandaff, Victorious, Illustrious, Maidstone, Argonaut and shore establishments; and active service in Korea and Malaysia. Served merchant Navy in tankers prior to RN. Past Chairman of Limavady branch. June 19. Aged 78.

James 'Jim' Brown. CPOWTR. Served 1973-95 in Llandaff, Avenger, Pembroke, Centurion, Cochrane, Rooke, Warrior and towards the end of his service in Camperdown (Dundee RNR). Wishaw branch and Scottish Area treasurer. June 2. Aged 52.

Charles Frederick Heywood. Served in Diomede (Torpedo man) then Duke of York throughout WW2 on Russian and Pacific convoys. Was in the 5.25 turret which fired the first starshell that lit up the Scharnhorst that was outgunned and sunk. Chairman of the Duke of York Association since 1990. President of Roydon branch RNA and welfare officer. April 29. Aged 83.

Harry Maurais. ERA. Aldenham and Eastbourne branches. Served WW2 in Aldenham and was a survivor when the ship was sunk in 1944. June 10. Aged 84.

James 'Jim' O'Brien. AB. Past chairman and life member Market Harborough branch. July 6. Aged 76.

Mary Islip. Associate member Harrogate and district branch. June 4. Aged 83.

Joe Rose. AB. Ganges boy. Perth and District branch. February.

Ian Whyte. Stoker. Served in Comus. Perth and District branch. May. Aged 75.

Andrew Gannon. AB. Ganges boy. Perth and district branch. June. Aged 75.

Lt Cdr John Hammond RNVR. Served 1941-46; Royal Arthur, Eglinton, Forth, Montclare, Pembroke, Black Swan, King Alfred, Lothian and Amethyst. Founder member, Bexhill-on-Sea branch. June 18. Aged 95.

Eric Mason. Served in minesweepers. Life member and secretary of South Liverpool branch for many years. July 3. Aged 79.

Robert Percy 'Bob' Fyles. Chief Aircraft Artificer (O) FAA. Served from 1945-70 in Theseus, Ocean, Peregrine, Ark Royal, Centaur, Victorious and Hermes; also three times at both RNAS Lossiemouth and Arbroath. Past president Margate branch. May 20. Aged 78.

ASSOCIATION OF RN OFFICERS

Cdr D F Buchanan. Served: Nuthatch, Owen, Cavendish, Centaur, Goldcrest, Sheba, Ganges, Terror and Excellent.

Capt J G Cannon. Served: Lanka, President and Cochrane.

Lt D N Charteris RNVR. Served:Totland

Lt F J Hurrell RNVR. Served: Dundonald.

Lt W E Longhurst. Served: Loch Dunvegan, Condor, Loch Fyne, Peregrine, Whitby, Victory, St Angelo and Daedalus.

S/Lt G C J MacPherson. Served: Neptune.

Capt R C Read. Served: Auriga, Scott, Lachlan, Drake, Dalrymple, Mermaid, Bulldog and Hydra.

Lt Cdr D F Trench. Served: Liverpool, Defender, Winchelsea, Cavalier, Bruce, Liverpool, Gambia, Drake, Heron, Phoenicia and Daedalus.

SUBMARINERS ASSOCIATION

D 'David' Banks. CPOMEM. Taunton. Served 1962-83 in Olympus (1962-63), Taciturn (1963-66), Tabard (1966-67), Porpoise (1967-69) and Renown (1970-80). Aged 64.

W H 'Harry' Bibb. L/Sea HSD. Australia. Served 1944-51 in Seraph, Sanguine, Templar, Tantivy, Saga, Seneschal, Ambush and Spiteful. Aged 84.

F 'Fred' Jackson. PO LTO. Bromley. Served 1943-46 in Varangian and Scotsman. Aged 84.

L 'Les' Thorpe. CPO Coxn. Shropshire. Served 1941-65 in Proteus, Sunfish, Spearhead, Auriga, Tiptoe and Thermopylae. Aged 90.

P J 'Pete' Weeks. CERA. Barrow. Served 1945-65 in Sentinel, Tapir, Turpin, Artemis, Auriga, Artful, Sturdy, Anchorite, Taciturn and Cachalot. Aged 81.

ALGERINES ASSOCIATION

Edward Urquhart. Sto/Mec. Served in Pluto. June 5. Aged 78.

Richard House. Sto 1. Served in Larne. June 14. Aged 81.

Douglas Millard. ERA 4. Served in Laertes. June 16. Aged 82.

Henry Clough. LSA(S). Served in Rifleman. June 29. Aged 77.

Jim O'Brian. AB. Served in Welcome. July 6. Aged 76.

LST & LANDING CRAFT ASSOCIATION

A E S Thomas RVM DSM. Served with LCT Flotilla 7 and on board LST 3043 HMS Messina.

D G Snook. Served LST 165 and HMS Farne. February 8.

F Dolby. Served LSI(H) Ulster Monarch and LSI(M) Queen Emma. February 9.

R S Smith. Served with LCI(L) Flotillas 266 and 271 and LCT 443. March 29.

D Griffith. Served LCI(L) and LCI(S) 526. March.

P S Williams. Served LCT 1129 and with LCV Flotilla 195. May 13.

W A Finch. Served with LCA Flotilla 550 and on LCT's. May 14.

L J Carter. Served LCT 417 and LCT(R) 171. June 8.

Albert Benson. Served LST 380. June 15.

H Ingle. Served LCA 6, LCF 29 and LCF 33. June 23.

John Harris. Served LCI(L) 125 and 131, LCT's 1226 and 7097. July 1.

Reunions

SEPTEMBER 2007

853 Series WE Artificers: A 22-year reunion is planned for Bristol on September 1-2. It's a chance to catch up and see how many lads managed to 'handle' a full career as well as see what the 'non-handlers' are up to now. Anybody from 853 Alpha, Bravo, Charlie or Delta who would like to come along should contact Rob Cameron for more information at robin.cameron1@btinternet.com or 07753 905336 or Flat 76, Point Royal, Rectory Lane, Bracknell, Berks, RG12 7HL.

Portsmouth Field Gun Crew Reunion 1977: Calling all 1997 crew members. All personnel involved in this successful season are invited to a ten-year reunion dinner on Saturday September 8 at the Royal Maritime Club, Portsmouth. For further details contact POPT Mac McConville (Clubz) on 01935 841733, 01935 456714 or popt@yeovilton.mod.uk.

HMS Sparrow: Reunion at the Fleet Club, Plymouth, September 7-9. All commissions welcome. Contact Geoff Middleton on 01562 700689.

HMS Comus: Portsmouth reunion, September 14 at the RNOC Club, Lake Road at 1930, September 15, buffet and dance at the Victory Club, HMS Nelson from 1930 with entertainment. Tickets £12, guests £14. Book early. More information from Bryan V Cox on 01903 232720.

HMS Suffolk Association: Reunion at Stratford upon Avon, September 14-16. Special Bismarck action commemoration. All welcome. Contact John Blackman on 01273 302147.

HMS Newcastle: Annual reunion September 15 in the Royal Maritime Club, Portsmouth, all ex C76 and D87 welcome. Details from secretary: David Park at dpark@ntlworld.com or tel: 01329 314733 or write to: 15 Ditton Close, Stubbington, Fareham, Hants, PO14 2EU.

River Class Frigate Association: 22nd annual reunion at the Royal Navy Club, Leamington Spa, on September 15. Muster 1100, lunch 1400. Castle-class frigates and Flower-class corvettes will also be welcome. Contact Ray Dodd, Clayleaches Farm, Arlies Lane, Stalybridge, Cheshire, SK15 3PZ or tel: 0161 338 4298.

HMS Ocean: 20th reunion and dinner at the County Hotel, Llandudno, September 28-30. For more details contact W Entwistle on 01282 433910.

OCTOBER 2007

HMS Diamond Association: Annual reunion is in Blackpool in October. For all information on the reunion or on joining the association please contact Ray Shipley on 01634 267084 or write to 20 Winchester Way, Rainham, Gillingham, Kent, ME8 8DD.

HMS Superb (Cruiser) Association: Reunion, October 5-7, at the King Charles Hotel, Gillingham, Kent. Details from Fred Kinsey on 01223 871505.

HMS Dainty: Reunion of HMS Dainty, October 5-7, at the Mollington Banastre Chester (all commissions welcome). Contact Chris Bolton at chrsbol@aol.com or tel: 0161 773 1304.

HMS Danae First Commission: 40th anniversary (of our commission) reunion, October 12-14, at the Royal Fleet Club Plymouth. Contact Dave 'Boots' Shoemaker at dfedcrusher25@hotmail.com or see the website at www.hms-danae.com or or tel: 01665 714507.

HMS Cheviot: Reunion at the King Charles Hotel, Gillingham, on October 13. Contact Vic Denham, 92 Swallow Road, Larkfield, Kent, ME20 6PZ or tel: 07949 955003.

Durham University Trafalgar Club: Dinner on October 13 in the Senate Suite, Durham Castle for all Durham Alumni who joined the Naval service. Contact Lt Kenny Dalglish at kd@lgli.sh or tel: 07967 202562.

HMS Trafalgar Association: Reunion on October 20 at 1900 at the Royal Sailors Home Club (Royal Maritime Club), Queen Street, Portsmouth. If you are interested in attending or joining contact Taff Pugh at mwpugh@tesco.net or tel: 01978 262956 or 07971 812820.

NOVEMBER 2007

HMS Eagle – last commission 1969-72: 'Pickle Night' reunion on HMS Warrior in Portsmouth on Friday November 9. All 'Eaglets' plus wives and partners very welcome. Dinner, dance and entertainment on the night, plus 'up spirits' reception and buffet on Saturday at the Home Club. For details contact organiser Mike Ellis (ex POPTI), e-mail slovpro@hotmail.com, mobile 07792 406419 or secretary Danny du Feu, e-mail danny@ddf-photography.co.uk, mobile 07891 660715 or write to 57 Westover Road, Leicester LE3 3DU.

Submarine Renown Association: Reunion will be in Leicester, November 16-18. For further details contact Gerry Rogers at gerryrogers@ntlworld.com visit the website at http://www.upspirits.co.uk or tel: 0116 2912195 or 0116 2336370.

Ton Class Association: Pre-Christmas lunch at High Wycombe on November 24. All TCA members and their ladies are invited to the lunch with raffle, etc. All enquiries to Edward Freathy at EdwardFreathy@aol.com or tel: 01628 523711.

DECEMBER 2007

HMS Adamant: Christmas reunion, December 15-18. HMS Maidstone most welcome. Contact AE Walker on 01977 700838 or 01262 468503 for information.

HMS Aldenham: A reunion will take place at the Royal British Legion, Bushey Mill Lane, Watford, December 15-16 for survivors, relations and friends of HMS Aldenham. More information from Ron Woods on 07958 692129.

FEBRUARY 2008

HMS St Vincent, Duncan 11 Entry (11 February 1958): A reunion to celebrate the 50th anniversary of our joining up will be held at the Royal Sailors Home Club, Portsmouth, on February 11, 2008. Currently there is contact with 24 of our 70-plus entry, but we are hoping many more of you will get in touch. For further information please contact John Gooderham at jdg@madasafish.com, tel: 01621 741443, or Jim Enoksen at Jim_bon.enoksen@btinternet.com or tel: 01489 577540.

JUNE 2008

HMS Raleigh: Exmouth 23 'Stokers' class. Join up date June 6 1978. Looking to meet up (destination to be decided) with any of the class on June 6 2008 – 30 year reunion. Contact Stuart 'Robbie' Robinson at stuartrobinson1@sky.com, tel: 07886 581927 or write to 6 Priory Gardens, Ashford, Middlesex, TW15 1NZ.

OCTOBER 2008

HMS Ulster 1958-60 Commission: The 50th and final reunion will take place from October 24-27 2008 at the Kistor hotel in Torquay, Devon. Details of cost and the weekend package can be obtained from Norrie Millen at ncot@candoo.com or write to 5-85 Inverlochy Blvd, Thornhill, Ontario, L3T 3R5. Details also on website at www.candoo.com/ncot/ulster12.html.

Contact sheet

Ministry of Defence: 0870 607 4455, www.mod.uk

Royal Navy recruitment: 0845 607 5555, www.royalnavy.mod.uk

Veterans Agency: 0800 169 2277, www.veteransagency.mod.uk

Medals enquiries: 0800 085 3600

RN and RM Service records: 023 9272 7531 or 023 9272 3114

Falklands 25: 0800 169 2277 (Veterans Agency), www.falklands25.com

Royal Naval Association: 020 7352 6764, www.royal-naval-association.co.uk

RNBT: 023 9269 0112 (general), 023 9266 0296 (grants), www.rnbt.org.uk

British Legion: 08457 725725, www.britishlegion.org.uk

RN Community: www.rncom.mod.uk

Naval Families Federation: 023 9265 4374, www.nff.org.uk

SSAFA Forces Help: 0845 1300 975, www.ssafa.org.uk

Royal Naval Museum: 023 9272 7562, www.royalnavalmuseum.org

Fleet Air Arm Museum: 01935 840565, www.fleetairarm.com

Royal Marines Museum: 023 9281 9385, www.royalmmarinesmuseum.co.uk

RN Submarine Museum: 023 9252 9217, www.rnsubmus.co.uk

National Maritime Museum: 020 8312 6565, www.nmm.ac.uk

Imperial War Museum: 020 7416 5320, www.iwm.org.uk

Sports lottery

June 9: £5,000 – **OC D P Kime**, HMS Explorer (URNU); £1,500 – **Cpl J D Morgan**, 848 NAS, Yeovilton; £500 – **PONN M Abdy**, MDHU Portsmouth.

June 16: £5,000 – **Lt I T C Perryman**, HMS Collingwood; £1,500 – **MEM1 M L Hardy**, HMS Chatham; £500 – **ALOM(C) C Barraclough**, HMS Cornwall.

June 23: £5,000 – **CPO B McCulloch**, HMS Victorious (Port); £1,500 – **WEA G Harris**, MWS Collingwood; £500 – **CPOMEA D Jackson**, HMS Vanguard (Port).

June 30: £5,000 – **AEM2 S R James**, HMS Illustrious; £1,500 – **MEM1 R P Huntrods**, HMS Sceptre; £500 – **CPOCT J D Donbavand**, JSSU Cheltenham.

July 7: £5,000 – **MA C L Bloor**, Keogh Aldershot; £1,500 – **Musn S E Maynard**, CTCRM Band; £500 – **Cpl M Brown**, HMS Raleigh.

Navy News on tape

Navy News is available free of charge on tape from Portsmouth Area Talking News for those with difficulty reading normal type. Contact 023 9269 0851 and leave a message with a contact number. No special equipment is needed to play the standard 90-minute cassettes.

Established literary agent seeks eyewitness accounts of combat in Afghanistan for possible inclusion in a new military anthology.

Please contact Robin Wade on 0207 488 4171

to discuss in confidence or email rw@rwla.com

NAVY NEWS Back Copies

Available from 1998 to the current edition

Please call 023 9273 4448 for details or email:

subscriptions@navynews.co.uk

Reporting from the Fleet





ARNO

Association of Royal Navy Officers

ARNO is the **Membership Association and Charitable Trust** for serving and retired commissioned officers of the RN, RM, QARNNS, the former WRNS and their Reserves.

The ARNO Charitable Trust provides advice and access to charitable funds for those members, their wives, widows and dependents who are in need and/or experience financial difficulties.

Membership Association subscription: £12 annually or a single payment of £180 for Life Membership.

Benefits of membership include;

- an Annual Year Book which has many interesting articles and useful information
- a secure on-line membership list
- a special rate for roadside breakdown cover
- temporary membership of the Naval Club, Mayfair, London
- provision for buying and selling uniform and/or swords
- an identity card
- entitlement to various trade discounts
- regional social functions (subsidised) *and many more benefits and services*

Contact details; *tel:* **020 7402 5231** *fax:* **020 7402 5533** *email:* **osec@arno.org.uk** **www.arno.org.uk**

Please send me details and membership application form:

Name & address_____

to: Membership Secretary, ARNO, 70 Porchester Terrace, LONDON W2 3TP

The Royal Navy writes on the issues affecting you

Sunny outlook for mental health facility

A NEW health facility for the Royal Navy has been officially opened in Portsmouth Naval Base by Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Adrian John.

The Department of Community Mental Health (DCMH) moved out of Haslar when the military handed control to the NHS earlier this year, moving across the harbour to Sunny Walk.

The new facility is one of three departments which make up Naval Mental Health Services, with a centre in each of the base ports.

Each department provides clinical, educational and advisory services in both a primary care role and to the executive, although inpatient services have been outsourced to the Priory group since a defence medical review in 2001.

Departments aim to ensure assessment and care for Service personnel – each department provides services to all three Armed Forces within their catchment areas – in order to bring them back to operational capability of to rehabilitate them for the transition to civilian life.

Another major requirement is the provision of uniformed mental health personnel for deployment – teams of four, a psychiatrist and three nurses, are available to support front-line forces in times of war or to support personnel dealing with disasters or traumatic incidents.

DCMHs are staffed by mental health professionals of various disciplines, including psychologists, psychiatrists, mental health nurses and social workers.

Outpatient clinics are held there, and the centres provide an out-of-hours service.

Emergency referrals will be seen within 24 hours.

'Golden Hello' for aircraft controllers

A 'GOLDEN Hello' bonus is being introduced to ensure the supply of Aircraft Controllers to ships at sea.

Since its introduction as a sideways-entry specialisation in 1990, replacing the Helicopter Controller cadre, the AC branch has not, for various reasons, attracted sufficient numbers.

This has led to high turnover of staff and extensive gapping – a major problem when most frigates or destroyers have only one AC on board.

In order to encourage ratings to apply for and complete AC training to fill the gaps which are expected, a financial retention incentive is now in place.

The AC Golden Hello, worth a total of £5,000, will be paid to new ACs who successfully complete the Leading Aircraft Controller Qualifying Course before the end of the qualifying period (March 31 2008), or to rejoining LACs or POACs who have left the RN since April 1 2001.

Transitional tapered rates of the golden hello will be paid to LACs who have qualified in the two years prior to April 1 2007.

The single-payment £5,000 incentive is linked to a three-year Return of Service and to a number of eligibility criteria.

Any personnel who believe they meet the necessary criteria to be eligible for a Golden Hello payment will be required to make an application, to their UPO, using the appropriate forms.

No payments will be made until a signed undertaking is given that the applicant understands and accepts the terms under which the payment will be made.

Recycling top of the agenda

RECYCLING was top of the Faslane agenda when the base took part in the United Nations' World Environment Day.

Various exhibitions stalls were laid out in both Faslane and nearby Coulport, with all kinds of information and giveaways.

"It was a great success," said organiser Barrie Duncan, BNS's estate maintenance and waste manager.

"It was evident that everyone recycles at home and wants to continue this at their place of work, which is very encouraging.

"This international campaign provided us with an ideal opportunity to put the issue of recycling firmly in the public eye again.

"Recycling on the base is pretty good, but we can always encourage people to do more. To this end we are implementing recycling facilities for both plastics and cans, and it is hoped that these will both be introduced within the next couple of months."

Last year Clyde recycled 58 tonnes of cardboard, 110 tonnes of wood, 489 tonnes of metal, 14 tonnes of rubber, 1.25 tonnes of glass, 13 tonnes of waste electronic and electrical equipment, 37,670 litres of oil and 7,565 litres of food oil for bio-fuels.

Academy treasures become trophies

Stepping into the Royal Navy's Trophy Store at HMS Nelson is like finding yourself in Aladdin's Cave, with gold and silver shimmering around you, and hundreds of reflections of your eyes gazing back at you from the polished metal, *writes Eloise Waldon-Day, of Portsmouth Grammar School.*

The trophies, as they are broadly named – though the items range from a block of wood from HMS Victory to a Thunderbirds puppet – are loaned out to anyone who can make good use of them.

Some historical items are used as centrepieces for formal occasions, or are gifts from countries to celebrate treaties and alliances.

For example, an admiral might borrow a set of paintings from the Trophy Store for the wall of his official residence.

Which David Costigan, Secretary to the RN Trophy Fund (RNTF) Trustees, has no problem with – he would much rather the items in his care are being put to good use rather than sitting in his sparkly domain.

The closing down of the Old Naval Academy *(see page 37)* meant that many artifacts of varying age and splendour were without a home – which is where the RNTF staff come in.

They collected the various items which they believed worthy of long-term care and of historical interest to members of the Navy, and maintain them.

As the time came for the ONA to close, the RNTF staff picked through the silverware, furniture and other items dotted around the building to preserve and care for.

To become an official Naval Trophy, an item has to have some historical or symbolic value to the Service, then have some paperwork signed, before settling down on a shelf in the Trophy Room – unless it has a particular relevance to a ship, which might want to borrow it.

A total of 109 pieces were removed from the ONA, including ornamental brass cannon and a wooden cabinet donated from a Royal Yacht used by Queen Victoria – discovered in the ladies' loos of the ONA.

The cabinet is the biggest, and arguably one of the most attractive, of the salvaged trophies.

The RNTF is given advice by experts on the approximate value of items, taking into consideration the hallmarks, intricate designs, and weight of a trophy to give it a value – much like the *Antique Road Show*, but without an irritating theme tune.

In fact, some of the items in the Trophy Store have featured on the programme, including the Lady Penelope from *Thunderbirds*.

Another recently-acquired treasure is a block of wood, about four feet tall, which, although not easily distinguishable from any other random piece of wood, is an original piece from HMS Victory, made of oak and copper.

I suspect this trophy may remain in the room for some time – there would be little point dragging out the (undoubtedly valuable) block of wood and putting it in the middle of the table for a dinner party when you could just as easily hire a shiny trophy.



● *The Royal Yacht cabinet, and other items from the ONA, in the RN Trophy Store at HMS Nelson in Portsmouth*

Service sports diving reviewed

CHANGES to the process of medical certification for diving conducted within the Joint Service Adventurous Training (JSAT) scheme are being brought in to align the Forces with civilian rules.

To comply with the Diving at Work Regulations 1997, Service sports divers must have a certificate of medical fitness issued by an HSE-approved medical examiner of divers, and the certificate cannot exceed 12 months.

However, negotiations – in which the good safety record of Service sports diving and the role of the Institute of Naval Medicine's 24-hour Duty Diving Medical Officer were presented – have concluded with recognition of Service Medical Officers and MOD Civilian Medical Practitioners who conduct and record diving medicals as 'an Approved Class of Medical Practitioners'.

Additionally, whilst it is always preferable for a doctor with formal training in diving medicine to certify fitness to dive (which remains an absolute requirement for Service occupational divers), the flexibility for any Service Medical Officer or MOD Civilian Medical Practitioner to certify fitness for Service sports diving has also been agreed and retained.

The new procedures for the issue of a medical certificate of fitness to dive within the JSAT scheme comprise the following:

- An initial physical medical examination, with a further examination every five years to age 40, every three years to age 50, and annually thereafter.
- Annual health surveillance by brief consultation with a Service Medical Officer or MOD Civilian Medical Practitioner who has access to primary care medical records.

The assessment of civilian members of Service branches who are not subject to the Diving at Work Regulations has already been changed to align with the UK Sports Diving Medical Committee system.

It is not acceptable to allow existing certificates to remain valid until the time they were originally due to expire because many of them are long-dated.

After January 1 2008 existing certificates will continue to be valid until the anniversary during 2008 of the date on which the certificate was originally issued.

Thereafter Service sports divers will need a new BR1750A approved medical certificate of fitness to dive.

Further information regarding the policy change can be obtained from SO2AT, tel 9380 22590, or OiC JSSADC Fort Bovisand 01752 405573, or go to www.jssadc.org

Navy takes the lead in Pride parade

A RECORD number of RN volunteers marched through the capital in uniform at the head of this year's London Pride parade.

Although Army and RAF personnel were allowed to march, they were restricted to civilian clothing.

Lt Cdr Craig Jones, of 2SL's Diversity and Equality Team, said: "This event is a superb way for the Royal Navy to demonstrate its commitment to lesbian/gay/bisexual personnel, and at the same time demonstrate to the wider community that we are genuinely committed to recruiting from a diverse pool of talent."

Despite heavy rain, the parade, was watched by thousands of people.

A safe bet

DEVONPORT Naval Base has won the prestigious RoSPA Defence Sector safety award for the third year running.

Having taken RoSPA's top safety award, last year, the base is unmatched by any private or public sector organisation over the past 50 years



● *From left: Vice President John Thompson, Chief Executive Cdr Stephen Farrington RN, former CE Cdr Jeremy Owens RN and President Cdre Peter Swan RN*

New man at top for RNBT

THE Royal Naval Benevolent Trust (RNBT) has a new man at the helm – only the third in over 30 years.

Cdr Stephen Farrington, who left the RN in 2005 after 37 years – his last sea appointment was as Commander (Engineering) in HMS Fearless – succeeds Cdr Jeremy Owens as Chief Executive.

Shore appointments included support and training roles for the Surface Flotilla, working within the Central Staff of the MOD and his final appointment was on the directing staff at the Royal College of Defence Studies.

On leaving the Royal Navy he joined the power industry before taking up his new post.

Stephen said: "It is a privilege to carry on the good work that began in 1922 and has continued under the stewardship of a number of Chief Executives who have been proud to contribute to building the Trust up to its current status of being very much in the premier league of benevolence.

"I look forward to guiding the Trust to the next level and working closely and in harmony not only with the other naval charities but in the wider arena of military and seafaring benevolence."

President Cdre Peter Swan said: "It is sad to see Jeremy go, but he heading for a well-earned retirement after 12 valuable and challenging years service."

The RNBT exists for the benefit of serving and ex-serving RN ratings and RM other ranks and their dependants in need or distress. The Trust not only provides funds to help with needs, but also runs a care home for those no longer able to live independently.

The RNBT depends on donations and legacies to balance its income and welcomes financial contributions. For further details see www.rnbt.org.uk and the RN intranet within the 2SL domain.

The Royal Navy writes on the issues affecting you

Let them know just what you think

Tell the Navy Board what you think!

The annual Continuous Attitude Survey for 2007 will shortly be distributed.

This will be your opportunity to tell senior management about how you feel about life in the Royal Navy or Royal Marines.

It covers such issues as:

- How satisfied are you with your pay and benefits?
- How satisfied are you with the way in which your career is managed?
- What do you thing about lengths of deployments?
- How is Service life affecting the amount of separation from your home and family?
- How satisfied are you with the way the RN/RM is managed?

The 2006 survey found that "overall people were satisfied with security of employment, amount of responsibility they are given and the Armed Forces pension scheme.

"Personnel reported that they are proud to be part of the RN or RM, they have pride in their uniform and believe they are treated fairly.

"However, we found that you were very dissatisfied with the x-factor, the quality of equipment and the amount of over-stretch.

"Royal Marines reported that they were dissatisfied with earnings and allowances, and did not believe they reflect their true worth."

The 2007 survey has been revised to make sure that we are asking the right questions – the ones that our policy makers want the answers to and on the issues that are important to your life in the Service.

It has also been aligned with the other Services to carry more weight on big issues, and has been renamed the Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey

The results are used to inform policy to make sure that when decisions are made about personnel issues, the attitudes and opinions of those on the front line, and those supporting the front line are taken into account.

The findings are reported to the Navy Board and are published in the House of Commons library, as well as used by desk officers to shape and inform a whole myriad of personnel projects and strategic reviews.

Last year's survey was used as evidence in key pay reviews, including the RM Financial Retention Incentive, which was awarded, the review of the x-factor, the Strategic Remuneration Review, and the AFPRB.

The survey will be distributed by ACET on behalf of DASA to a random sample of people between July and September.

So if you receive a copy in the post, please take the time to complete it, as the more people that complete it, the more weight the results will carry.

Completed responses are analysed by researchers and not seen by the chain of command, so remain anonymous.

A summary of the results will be published later in the year in *Navy News* and the *Globe and Laurel*, and the full reports with be published on the RN web.

For more information contact Julia Carden, the HR Research Manager, on 93832 5495 (BT 02392 625495) or email her on Julia.Carden411@mod.uk

It's your 2.6

NEED to get your message across to the rest of the RN?

To feature in 2-6 contact Lt Cdr Dave Joyce at Fleet Media Ops on 93832 8809 or Lt Cdr Harvey Burwin at DPR(N) on 9621 85984.

Telling the story of the RN today



● *The Royal Navy Presentation Team – from left, Mne Sean Ivey, Lt Emma Blackburn, Cdr Richard Buckland and LS Chris Bourne*

THE Royal Navy Presentation Team (RNPT) tours the UK telling the story of the 'Royal Navy Today' to the public at some 100 events annually.

The team's aim is to raise levels of understanding of the Navy's role and its relevance to the UK and its citizens, particularly amongst leaders in the business, industry, academic, civic and professional communities.

The multimedia presentation lasts 30 minutes and gives a taste of the Navy's roles, from counter-narcotics to anti-terrorism, defence diplomacy to disaster relief and crisis management to high-intensity warfare.

The presentation is followed by a lively and candid question-and-answer session.

Presentations invariably culminate in a drinks reception where the public can discuss issues with the team.

The presentation is not restricted to public events; presentations are given to private audiences such as businesses, business clubs, societies, and universities.

As well as being informative, the presentation is designed to be entertaining, thought-provoking and an opportunity to speak frankly face-to-face with the RN.

The team is always looking for opportunities to speak to appropriate audiences.

If you are interested in attending a presentation, inviting the team to visit your organisation or have contacts that you feel they should approach, visit www.royal-navy.mod.uk/rnpt, write to the RN Presentation Team, 11/12 Tedder Close, West End Road, Ruislip, HA4 6NR or call on 0208 833 8020.

Watch *Navy News* got dates of forthcoming presentations – the team visits Dundee on September 25 and Dunfermline the following day.

The insider's guide to Transformation

SINCE Fleet Transformation started in August 2006 considerable work has taken place to review Fleet processes to improve support of the Front Line.

But what is Fleet Transformation, and haven't we been here before with Fleet First and the merger of 2SL and CINCFLEET staffs?

The man with the answers is Rear Admiral Mike Kimmons who heads up the Fleet Transformation project, and *Navy News* visited him to find out what is going on.

What is Fleet Transformation and why are we doing it?

Fleet Transformation is about improving the way Fleet does its business, reviewing what we do, how we do it and looking to continually improve.

Our business is getting the best capability to the front line, and our men and women working there need the finest support.

We reviewed how we were doing our business after Fleet First and the staff merger and realised the numbers of people working in rear support considerably outnumbered those engaged in daily front-line operations and that the gap was going to widen over the next few years.

In addition, defence has been subject to huge financial pressure in recent years and we knew we would have to be smarter about how we spent our budget.

Before we started to Transform last year, Fleet's processes were complex and inefficient; there was duplication, decisions took too long owing to long command chains and bureaucracy.

Everyone realised this and were getting very frustrated.

These are the main reasons we are conducting Fleet Transformation, and this review of the way we do our business is crucial to overcoming such frustration.

So we are using a 'bottom up' approach, which means people who really understand what is required are leading the redesign and making recommendations to senior management rather than the other way around.

This empowerment is crucial to the success of Transformation as it allows the 'junior' staffs, who really understand how we currently conduct business and will manage Fleet in the future, to own the processes; they can shape their own future and avoid the frustrations that we, myself included, have endured in the past!

Transformation has focused on listening to the Front Line.



● *Rear Admiral Mike Kimmons*

Clearly the person closest to the problem knows what is required to fix it, and that is why Transformation's main focus is 'command pull'.

Command pull is about the front-line commanders being closely involved in defining what we need to deliver operational success so that the correct capabilities are prepared by Fleet.

So how exactly are Fleet's processes reviewed?

Our first task was to agree on exactly what was required to achieve Fleet's aims.

Four broad areas of activity were identified; Capability (including Sustainability), Manpower and Training, Management and Advice, and Generate and Employ.

After this the real work began and is continuing now.

This is when the 'bottom up' approach comes into its own, with everyone from killicks to admirals becoming engaged in a series of five day improvement events across the four areas of Fleet activity.

Everyone involved looked objectively at their process and who does what.

Then the team agrees where there's duplication, waste or inefficiency, and so a more efficient way of working can be realised.

This benefits Fleet as the tasks required are completed more effectively while the individual benefits because they can see how their contribution is linked to achieving the aim.

However, there can be resistance to change.

A main challenge as the Transformation Chief is to help people understand that Transformation is not about manpower cuts and change for change's sake.

It is about being smarter, doing things better, being more efficient and recognising value especially in our people.

To be honest, I expect people to be wary of change, but as Transformation achieves greater successes and people see the improvements for themselves, I am confident that those sitting on the fence will understand that Fleet Transformation is in the individual's interest.

Good news spreads fast!

You spoke of Transformation successes but what have the improvement events achieved and what's in it for the sailor on the Front Line?

When Transformation began a lot of the work was at a necessarily high level; the big parts of the naval jigsaw had to be put in place before we could start to delve down into the detail and it wasn't easy to see where the benefits were.

When the key areas of Fleet activity had been identified we put some flesh on the bones and the various staffs have been working hard this year to realise change and improve our processes.

For instance, the Manpower and Training area have been looking at improving the career management structure for junior and senior Marines and sailors.

Essentially, what was once a tricky system has now been streamlined into a one-stop shop with a single career manager allocated to each specialisation who understands exactly what people require to progress their career and get on.

The bottom line here is that while the new process benefited the individual, the sense of satisfaction for all those involved in providing that support now feel cannot be underestimated; a win all round.

Another more operationally-focused example is the improvement to how we learn from our experiences on the front line.

Previously lessons from operations and deployments took far too long to reach the various training establishments and inform training; this was caused by a clumsy and time-consuming bureaucratic process.

Looking at the process objectively, with all the right people in the room, soon cut through the red tape and now we have a process that delivers operational lessons to those that need them now and we have already seen benefits to ongoing front line operations.

Can you tell us where we can get regular, up-to-date information on Fleet Transformation?

Keeping everyone informed on what is happening in Transformation is important.

The recently-issued 2-6 DVD, with its Personnel Support Brief notes, has a section on Transformation which everyone should make sure they see.

I send a weekly email update to all units to let people know what is going on; if you haven't seen a copy, see your Divisional Officer or Line Manager, and if you still get no joy drop me a line at mike.kimmons286@mod.uk and I will get you up to speed!

TV licence campaign is launched

TV LICENSING is launching a new publicity campaign which is rolling out to military bases nationwide this month.

In total, TV Licensing will distribute 80,000 leaflets, 40,000 "homemover cards" and 8,000 posters, designed to help Service personnel and their families to know their legal requirements and the payment options available – and how to avoid a £1,000 fine.

The MOD published a Defence Information Notice (2006DIN02-084) in March last year providing guidelines on the legal obligations to have a valid TV licence and to remind units and establishments that it is MOD policy to give escorted access for TV Licensing sales staff and enforcement officers when visits to MOD establishments are requested.

Simply put, all UK-based Service personnel living in single living accommodation or service families accommodation (including foreign nationals attached to UK Armed Forces or based in the UK) need to be covered by a valid licence, whether programmes are received via a TV or other devices such as a computer or mobile phone.

TVs in communal areas, messes or clubs are covered by different rules.

Even if personnel have a TV licence at their home address, if they live-in and have a TV in their room, they need to be covered by a valid licence.

If personnel relocate they will need to inform TV Licensing of their new address to remain correctly licensed, either on www.tvlicensing.co.uk/moving or by calling 0870 241 5590.

If posted abroad, personnel may be eligible for a refund.

Phone link saves cash

A PRIVATE wire link between Vodafone and the Global Telephone Network (GTN) is helping drive down defence telephone bills.

The link goes through the Circuit Switched Service (CSS) and means that if you prefix a military phone number with 9532 you can access the CSS from a Vodafone business mobile phone.

Calls will be charged at a Vodafone to PSTN tariff of 3p per minute.

An advantage of using this method is that when staff are out on detached duty they do not always have STD codes to hand, so it cuts the need to go through an operator.

The calls are relatively inexpensive, and the numbers are easy to identify on bills as they all start with a 9.

Keep abreast of legislation

Calling all policy-makers.

Like it or not, there is no escaping the fact that in today's world there is no shortage of laws and law-makers, new rules and regulations.

Enter the MOD Legislation Database – an up-to-date corporate tool to ensure your policy complies with the law.

Check it out regularly to keep abreast of emerging legislation from Westminster, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the European Union.

It is more than just pages of useful info about what has happened and what is being planned; it is also a gateway to many other relevant areas of proposed developments in public policy.

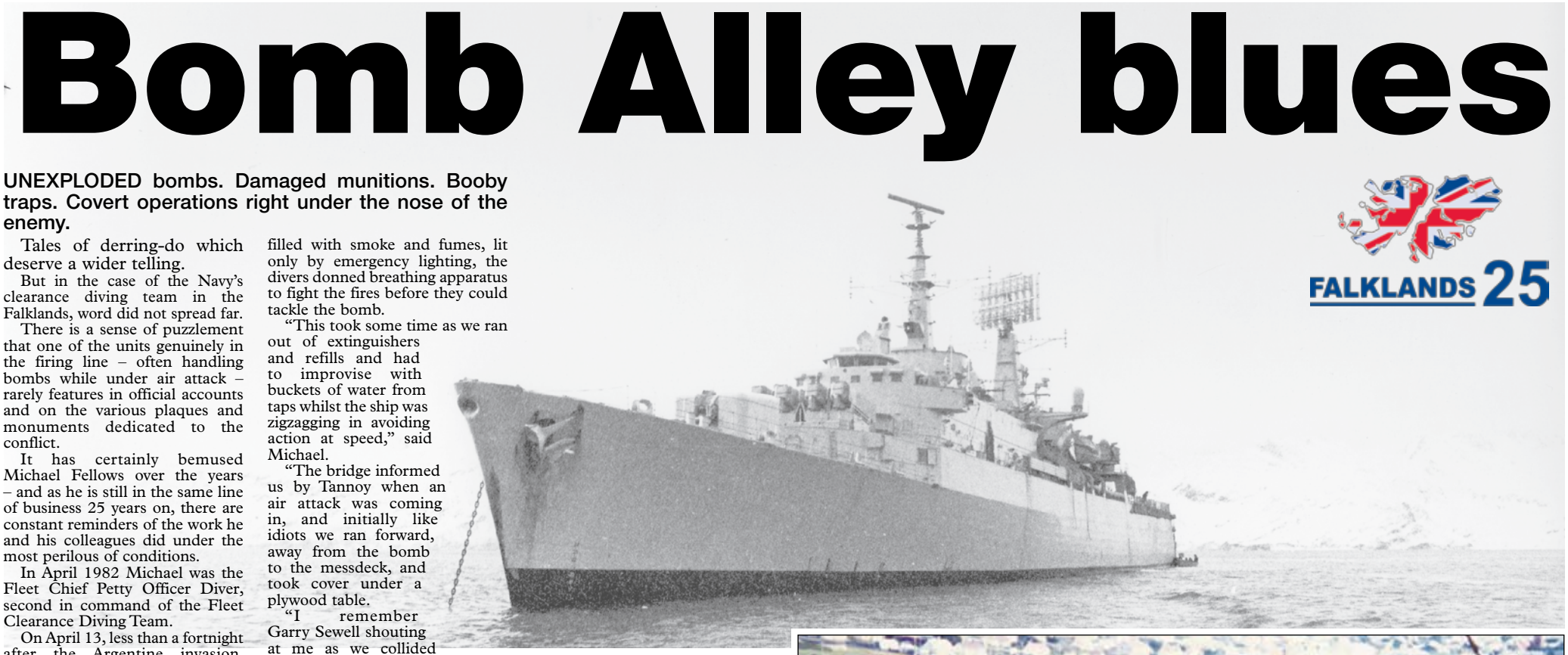
The Database has been set up by the Directorate General Legal Services (DGLS) and is available via the Defence Intranet – Applications & Tools – Legal, for those policy leads on DII who want to find out more.

An Access version of the Legislation Database has been provided for non-DII users and can be accessed at www.dglslegdatabase.dii.r.mil.uk/

For further information contact Anna Jean; DGLS-Sec2a, 9621 85758, or James Longworth; DGLS-Sec2b, 9621 80377

Bomb Alley blues

UNEXPLODED bombs. Damaged munitions. Booby traps. Covert operations right under the nose of the enemy.



FALKLANDS 25

● *HMS Antrim at anchor in the South Atlantic in 1982*

Tales of derring-do which deserve a wider telling.

But in the case of the Navy's clearance diving team in the Falklands, word did not spread far.

There is a sense of puzzlement that one of the units genuinely in the firing line – often handling bombs while under air attack – rarely features in official accounts and on the various plaques and monuments dedicated to the conflict.

It has certainly bemused Michael Fellows over the years – and as he is still in the same line of business 25 years on, there are constant reminders of the work he and his colleagues did under the most perilous of conditions.

In April 1982 Michael was the Fleet Chief Petty Officer Diver, second in command of the Fleet Clearance Diving Team.

On April 13, less than a fortnight after the Argentine invasion, Michael and his team were on an RAF Hercules bound for Ascension Island in case ships needed help with unexploded ordnance, and to cover underwater security.

Shortly after, they embarked in RFA Sir Tristram and sailed south to prepare for a similar task with the Task Group.

The thought that Michael and his team would be dealing with unexploded bombs on British warships was a novel one.

"This phenomenon had only happened once in modern history – during World War 2, when Lt Roberts VC and PO Gould VC had the task of removing an unexploded bomb from below the casing of a submarine whilst under threat of an enemy air attack," said Michael.

"But it did happen with a vengeance. I was right in the forefront of the action, and found myself not only removing the first and last dropped unexploded bombs of the conflict, but also conducting the reconnaissance and formulating the draft methodology for the removal of the unexploded bombs that hit warships Antrim, Argonaut, Plymouth and RFA Sir Galahad."

The "real fun" started on May 21 when a 1,000lb bomb smashed into the Sea Slug missile loading doors of destroyer HMS Antrim, bounced through the missile magazine and a pyrotechnic store before wedging itself into a toilet cubicle.

Antrim was, at the time, fending off air attacks on SS Canberra in Falkland Sound, and it was during further such attacks that Michael, clutching his 'bomb bag', and colleagues LDs Garry Sewell and Nigel Pullen were flown from San Carlos Water to the destroyer.

"I dropped out of the lowering strop of the helo on to a foam-covered deck right alongside an abandoned gun surrounded by pools of blood," said Michael.

Down below, in a compartment filled with smoke and fumes, lit only by emergency lighting, the divers donned breathing apparatus to fight the fires before they could tackle the bomb.

"This took some time as we ran out of extinguishers and refills and had to improvise with buckets of water from taps whilst the ship was zigzagging in avoiding action at speed," said Michael.

"The bridge informed us by Tannoy when an air attack was coming in, and initially like idiots we ran forward, away from the bomb to the messdeck, and took cover under a plywood table.

"I remember Garry Sewell shouting at me as we collided under a table: 'You might be the Fleet Chief, but I was here first – bugger off!' before we both collapsed laughing.

"Why were we worried about Argie cannon fire when one slip of the hand or violent movement of the ship could actuate the fusing system of the bomb, killing us and over 400 sailors on board?"

Once the debris was cleared the team could see the drab green bomb, white stencilled letters proclaiming 'Made in England'.

The nose and tail were badly damaged and the fuse distorted out of recognition, wires hanging from it suggested a booby-trap.

Michael reported his findings to the bridge. The fuse could not be removed, and as there was no precedent, he proposed a 'lift-and-shift' approach.

"I formulated a plan to cut a passage for the bomb up through two decks, move the weapon aft, and then lift it, keeping it on an even keel, by means of a series of tackles and shear legs, to the upper flight deck," he said.

"I also remembered to keep reassuring the lads that I knew what I was doing – and wishing I had put a spare pair of knickers and my reading glasses in my pocket."

Sailors cut away steel decks and rigged shear legs, but it was six hours before they could start moving the live bomb.

"I was very worried that the violent manoeuvring of the ship as she came under attack was going to jolt the bomb and cause the fuse to detonate," said Michael.

"We improvised wedges and my two divers lay alongside the weapon to keep it steady whilst I snipped at loose metal around the fuse with pliers in an attempt to identify the origin and type."

Breaking off to send a sitrep to the UK, he sought advice from experts, to no avail.

After dark, with air attacks over, the ship halted, and with the majority of the ship's company evacuated to the fo'c'sle for safety, the 'lift-and-shift' began.

At one point, the captain was told to go full ahead on both engines, with a hard turn to starboard to kick the stern over, allowing the bomb to be lowered over the side without hitting the screws.

Just before the final drop, they received a signal from Fleet warning them not to attempt to move the bomb, as it was almost certainly booby-trapped.

"You can imagine my response to this well-timed advice!" said Michael.

Almost ten exhausting hours after the start of the operation, the Argentinian-dropped British bomb was consigned to the seabed.

But a celebratory cup of tea in the wardroom was cut short when Michael was asked to report to HMS Argonaut, which had two unexploded bombs on board.

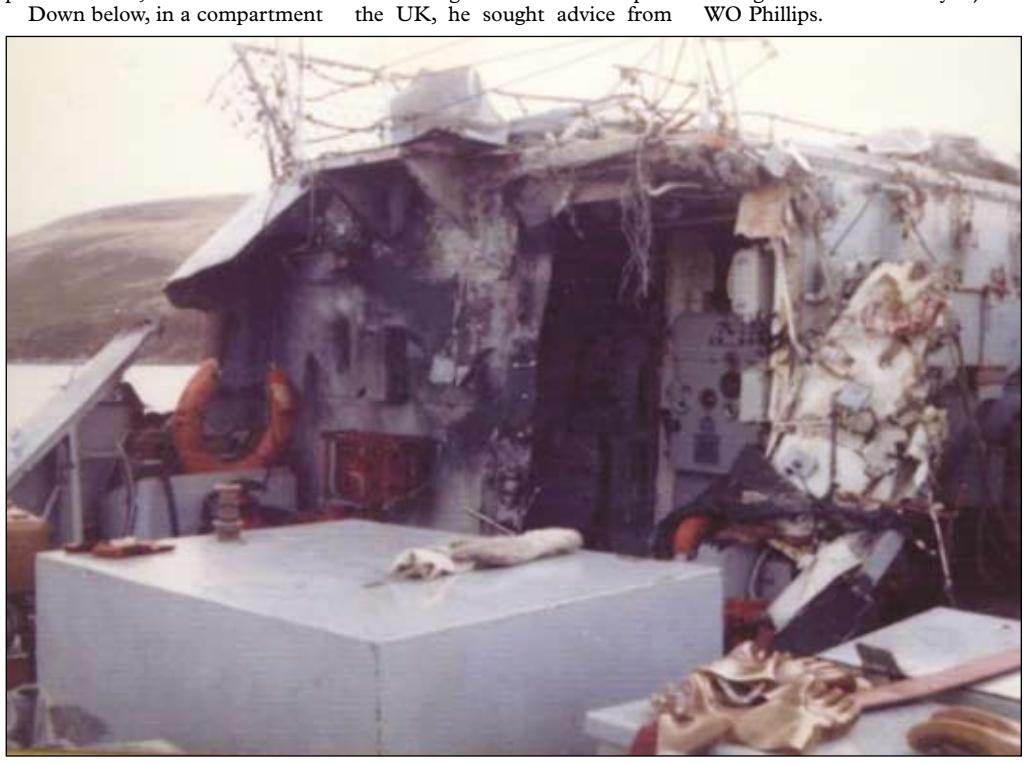
Chief Divers Ben Gunnel and Bill Baucham went to assess the frigate, and Michael devised a plan based on the Antrim bomb.

Argonaut's hull was patched, allowing access to the site of the bomb, and the bodies of two victims removed.

But with no senior bomb disposal staff on hand, Michael gratefully accepted an offer of help from Royal Engineers WO2 John Phillips and SSgt Jim Prescott.

The Army pair successfully removed one Argonaut bomb, but the following day were caught in the blast of one of two bombs on Antelope, which exploded while they were attempting to defuse it.

The explosion claimed the life of SSgt Prescott and badly injured WO Phillips.



● *Damage to frigate HMS Plymouth during the Falklands Conflict*



● *The hard-pressed team of RN clearance divers in the Falklands, having spent weeks of non-stop ship's hull searching for limpet mines, underwater bomb damage repair, beach landing reconnaissance and unexploded munitions disposal*

Lt Cdr Dutton, the Officer in Charge of Fleet Team 1, two Chief Divers and team of divers, employing the Antrim techniques, conducted a seven-day operation to remove the bomb and damaged munitions from Argonaut's magazine whilst she lay at anchor.

On May 25 CPO Diver Graham (Piggy) Trotter, who had just arrived with Fleet Team 2, visited Michael to seek advice before tackling a bomb on RFA Sir Galahad.

The pair went to look at the device, which lay in the battery charging room, and another lift-and-shift approach was proposed.

Piggy and Lt Bernie Bruen, his boss, removed the bomb without mishap.

On June 3 Michael was summoned to HMS Fearless to organise and subsequently lead a covert reconnaissance operation behind enemy lines at Bluff Cove to locate and destroy underwater mines and other obstructions that could endanger a landing.

Divers and members of the special forces reconnoitred the area, gleaning intelligence from the local population, and carrying out a river-bed contour survey.

Five divers – Chief Ben Gunnell, Tony Groom, Billy Evernden, Stan Bowles and George Sharp – carried out the underwater survey and obstacle removal.

The start of the operation was delayed by heavy gunfire and enemy activity, then the party was 'ground-hopped' in by helicopter

Using hand signals and a flashing light, so as not to alert Argentinian troops just metres away, the men completed their survey without mishap and returned to Bluff Cove settlement to spend the night in a pen full of noisy – but warm – sheep.

A successful landing was carried out the following night, by which time the divers had returned to Falkland Sound.

And it was there on June 8 that HMS Plymouth shipped two 1,000lb bombs, forcing her to run for cover in San Carlos Water.

Along with LDs Tony Groom and Billy Evernden, Michael headed to Plymouth, to be met on the quarterdeck by an officer who pointed out the area of damage then led them to the bridge.

Michael tripped over the coaming of the bridge door, wondering whether his stumble, along with the fumes of rum on his breath from a small tot of rum hours earlier, might give an unfavourable impression.

The first bomb had damaged two mortars and smashed compartments before passing through the far side of the ship.

Two depth charges on the upper deck had been hit, one partially exploding and demolishing a mess deck below.

Sea Cat missiles had also been damaged, and the second bomb, while also passing through the ship, had broken two mortars and bent three barrels of a loaded mortar device.

A painstaking process of making damaged munitions safe before dumping them overboard ensued, while the ship's company gathered on the fo'c'sle in survival suits.

"During the whole of the operation, which took about six hours, we could hear the sound of singing echoing off the hills in the enclosed, still waters of Bomb Alley," said Michael.

"Not the cheerful verses from a Sods Opera or those encouraging one's favourite football team, but songs with a serious religious theme intermingled with *Eternal Father, Strong to Save* and *Land of Hope and Glory*.

"On returning to the bridge I was greeted by a now-enthusiastic Officer of the Watch who questioned whether the task had been routine or difficult.

"My reply was that it had gone well enough, and proof of that was that we were all still alive – but that the singing had been a little aggravating at times.

"'To be quite candid, Mr Fellows,' he replied, 'when you arrived on the bridge and fell flat on your face, we almost to a man thought: God help us – the only bomb disposal man available in the southern hemisphere and he's drunk. We are going to need some spiritual assistance.'"

The operation was still in progress the next day, when loose explosives had to be disposed of, and the barrels of the three mortars cut away – without using tools which generated heat – to release the undamaged munitions.

The first day of liberation saw the divers again in the thick of it, landing from HMS Intrepid into Stanley to clear discarded ammunition and booby traps around defensive positions.

And then, job done, the team was one of the first Naval units to return home, by air.

"At the start of the Falklands Campaign I had in excess of 22 years' bomb and mine disposal experience behind me that obviously helped tremendously," said Michael, who won the DSC and now runs munitions location and disposal company Fellows International Ltd, based at Arundel in West Sussex.

"However, the conflict was the first time that I had been involved in rendering weapons safe whilst the enemy was actively trying to kill my team and me.

"It's an experience I would not have missed for the world – one that gave me the unique opportunity to test my knowledge and leadership under fire.

"Unfortunately the Royal Navy Clearance Diving Teams involved in the conflict, who per-capita possibly won more gallantry awards than any other unit, received no recognition whatsoever on the Falkland Islands War Memorial in Port Stanley despite numerous letters to our leaders and others in authority.

"What a shame…"



● *The Staff Officers' Mess, as it was called in 1850. The building is little changed now but the photograph was taken before the area in front was grassed over and the trees planted. The ornate Victorian gas lamp is still there.*



● *Previous Mess Presidents of the Old Naval Academy attending their final lunch in May*

School for Scandal

THE Old Naval Academy, in Portsmouth Naval Base, has finally closed its doors after 275 years of somewhat chequered history.

In its latter years, the ONA had the sedate atmosphere of a gentleman's club, providing lunches and respectable social events for its members.

However, in its early years the academy witnessed such scenes of debauchery that St Vincent went so far as to call it "a sink of vice and abomination, which ought to be abolished" and Barham described it as a "nursery of vice and immorality"

Sadly, the details of the 18th-Century goings-on are lost in the mists of time (despite *Navy News*' best efforts to uncover them) but certainly there were many contemporary accounts of its general dirtiness and squalor, and the idleness of the students.

"The scholars' heads abound with vermin," reported Commissioner Gambier to the dockyard officers in 1774. "Care is to be taken that they appear constantly washed and combed at breakfast and dinner."

The listed Georgian building, with its distinctive red-brick façade and gilded ball atop a cupola, was built in 1729 as an academy to train young officers.

Originally called the Portsmouth Naval Academy, it opened its doors in 1733 to "the sons of Noblemen and Gentlemen" between the ages of 13 and 16, to teach navigation, gunnery, writing, arithmetic, French, drawing, fencing and dancing.

Its success was limited in its early years, not just because of its dubious reputation, but because most 18th-Century sea-officers looked down upon schoolroom education and theory and preferred training at sea.

However, during the 1770s, sons of serving officers could be educated there at public expense, and it grew more popular, until by the early 1800s it was oversubscribed.

Among its students were Francis and Charles Austen, brothers of Jane, who entered the Academy in 1786 and 1791 respectively. Francis Austen later became Admiral of the Fleet and is commemorated in St Ann's Church in Portsmouth Naval Base.

The Academy's reputation improved in the early 1800s and in 1808 it reopened as the Royal Naval College, with the Rev James Inman, one of the leading mathematicians of his day, as Professor. At the end of the Napoleonic War the curriculum was "English, Latin and Greek every day before breakfast, maths from 9 to 12 noon, afternoons from 2 to 4.30 either history and geography or French and drawing."

Every other Saturday was set aside for small arms training, and on intervening Saturdays the boys would travel by boat to Haslar to play football in an area in front of the hospital entrance.

The cupola was the first tactical school – sea fighting strategies would be played out with models on the floor, and students would watch from the gallery. The ball on the top was used as a representation of the sun for sextant work.

Despite its increasing success, the Academy fell victim to an economising Admiralty in 1837 and closed its doors as a school. Thereafter the building became a tender to HMS Excellent to teach science, and from 1873 it was used as accommodation for junior officers.

From 1906 it became the Navigation School HMS Dryad, and the building was modernised and electrified. During the Great War it was used for accommodation, and remodelled in the 1920s.

In 1979, on the 250th anniversary of its first founding, the building was renamed the Old Naval Academy.

By the time it closed in June, it was the oldest Naval Wardroom still in use, and the last to employ entirely Royal Navy chefs and RN and civil service stewards.

It was renowned throughout the service for the quality of its food and its staff, some of whom had worked there for nearly 20 years.

However, with the transfer of so many people to Fleet headquarters at Whale Island, mess numbers fell and the wardroom had to close. Most of the building is now empty and its future is undecided.

Its fine silverware and furniture, which included a dressing table from the Royal Yacht Victoria and Albert, has been sent to the trophy store in HMS Nelson.

The last functions to be held there were a lunch for past Mess Presidents in May, and a Summer Ball and final lunch in June.



● *The ONA suffered a direct hit in World War 2. This photograph, taken in September 1942, shows the extent of the damage.*

ACCOMMODATION

The Royal Maritime Club
(Formerly The Royal Sailors' Home Club)
Excellence and tradition...

The Royal Maritime Club is the perfect venue for get-togethers, overnight stays, first class holiday breaks, social occasions and business meetings. The Club is also licensed for the marriage ceremony.

Set in the heart of British naval tradition and synonymous with naval excellence, The Royal Maritime Club offers members and guests:

- a welcoming ambience
- a comfortable stay in well-appointed accommodation
- enjoyment of indoor leisure facilities with swimming pool
- first-class live entertainment
- special rates for seafarers and other military personnel

Very close are HMS Victory, the Mary Rose and HMS Warrior, also rail and ferry links, the harbourside Gunwharf Quays shopping complex and the Spinnaker Tower.

Contact us for details of former Military and Associate Membership

...The Naval Heritage Club of Portsmouth

T: 023 9282 4231 Advanced Bookings: 023 9283 7681
F: 023 9229 3496 E: info@royalmaritimeclub.co.uk www.royalmaritimeclub.co.uk
Queen Street, Portsmouth, Hampshire PO1 3HS

SUPPORT YOUR CLUB

All booking requirements in writing only, enclosing £5 deposit on each Family Room. Enclose a S.A.E. for your receipt.
ACCOMMODATION: For Service Personnel, their families and dependents plus ex. serving personnel and R.N.A. members who may be visiting the Plymouth area.
FUNCTIONS: We cater for all types of functions at very competitive prices. Ships Functions, Mess Parties, Wedding Receptions, Reunions of ships, past and present, we offer an ideal facility.

Royal Fleet Club
Morice Square, Devonport, Plymouth PL1 4PQ
Telephone inquiries only Plymouth 01752 562723
ASK FOR QUOTATION, CONTACT THE MANAGER
WITHOUT DELAY TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT

DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM
119 High St, Old Portsmouth, PO1 2HW
Pub, Restaurant, Quality B&B, Competitive Rates
HOLIDAY BREAKS
WEEK-ENDS • REUNIONS
Minutes from Dockyard, Station, Gunwharf
Tel: 023 9282 7067 Fax: 023 9282 7095
www.dukeofbuckingham.com

ADJOINING PLYMOUTH HOE AND SEAFRONT
Friendly no smoking guest house.
All rooms ensuite inc. posh four poster.
CTV, Tea/Coffee, CH. Parking
Edgcumbe Guest House
50 Pier Street, West Hoe
01752 660675
enquiries@edgcumbeguesthouse.co.uk
www.edgcumbeguesthouse.co.uk

Plymouth
Chester Guest House
54 Stuart Road, Pennycomequick
01752 663706
10-bedroom property short walk from station/town centre. 5-minute drive from docks. CTV. Tea/Coffee. Secure Parking. Garden.
Email: info@chesterplymouth.co.uk
~ Families welcome ~
WEB: www.chesterplymouth.co.uk

St. Margaret's Lodge
in Craneswater, Southsea
AA ★★★★
Further information:
3 Craneswater Gate
Southseas PO4 0NZ
tel: 02392 820097
email: enquiries@stmargarets-southsea.co.uk
www.stmargarets-southsea.co.uk

FLORIDA
Special rate for Naval personnel of £250 per week
FREE high speed internet
4 bedroom villa with private pool. Close to Disney
Email:
info@citrusgardensflorida.co.uk
Website:
www.citrusgardensflorida.co.uk

NAVY NEWS ADVERTISING RATES

DISPLAY
Full Page£2,268
Half Page£1,253
Quarter Page£709
S.c.c. (min 3 cm).....£14.05

CLASSIFIED
Lineage 90p per word
Trade minimum 30wds.
For Sale, Minimum 10wds.
Box number£3

PENFRIENDS
See details on Miscellaneous Page
Discounts, Colour Rates, Technical Details available on request.

Telephone: 023 9272 5062
Fax: 023 9283 0149
for a full Media Pack
www.navynews.co.uk

Shore touch by surveyors



● *Above: Listening for the messenger to trip the first bottle of a Nansen cast. Nansen bottles were designed to be activated by a brass 'messenger' which caused the bottle to tip over at a certain depth, trapping a sample of seawater using spring-loaded valves. The sample could then be tested for salinity and temperature. The tipping mechanism could also set off a second and subsequent messengers in a sequence, activating a line of bottles at varying depths.*

COULD you erect a pole standing in icy waters whilst being buffeted by winds and waves? Could you make a secondary triangulation station requiring precision, or reweb a theodolite telescope?

And would you, after perfecting these skills and more, put up with being paid only 1s 6d per day extra?

Eloise Waldon-Day, of Portsmouth Grammar School, looks back at 100 years of Surveying Recorders

No, me neither. And yet, a century ago, that is what the Navy's Surveying Recorders had to put up with.

Theirs was arguably one of the hardest and least-recognised positions in the Navy. And they deserved to be recognised.

The Hydrographic Department has a long pedigree, as it was formed in 1795 when Alexander Dalrymple was appointed Hydrographer of the Navy and found himself with the job of sorting, selecting and compiling up to 20,000 charts and reports which had been left unexamined.

The RN Surveying Service, as it became known, dates back to January 1817, when special rates of pay were established for officers employed in hydrography.

But it was almost a century before the ratings were brought into the fold, though for decades they had been assisting officers with their tasks.

The proposal to introduce the SR specialisation was initially rejected in 1904.

Admiral Sir Arthur Field, ninth Hydrographer of the Navy, was running out of volunteers for a job which involved conditions of exposure and long hours.

He saw that no one would willingly put in the necessary effort without some inducement, and successfully resubmitted the proposal in 1907.

There is no exact date for the introduction of extra pay for SRs, but there is an attractive logic to the possibility of it being July 3, the day of St Thomas the Apostle, patron saint of surveyors, which would have been known to their Lordships at the time.

Although the 'Establishment of Roster' for Surveying Recorders (SRs) officially appeared in 1920, the first documented evidence of their presence was in 1908, when POs and ratings "employed on certain surveying duties" qualified for 6d, 1s or 1s 6d, "according to ability".

SRs wore a badge representing an octant, a device said to resemble a ham bone.

Training was conducted locally on an *ad hoc* basis, and was a lengthy, tortuous process, learning convoluted facts and information such as how to use logarithms and heliostats, whether from a fixed or moving platform.

After qualifying, the new SRs would be sent around the world on surveying vessels to examine features in the territory of potential or existing enemies, to chart sea lanes and find new, quicker or safer trading routes.

During World War 2, manning harbour craft became the most popular WRNS category, and Wrens all over England abandoned their duties or requested to relinquish their rates to start again as 'real sailors'.

Among their duties were running the launch employed on surveying duties in Plymouth.

Their standard of work was such that the Navy Hydrographer at the time sent a special commendation to the Director of the WRNS, Dame Vera Laughton Matthews, saying that the high standard of work was 'fully comparable with what would have been expected from a regular Navy crew'.

The report particularly praised the boat's coxswain, LW Florence Hayes, for her exceptional ability in handling the boat and all-round intelligence, coolness and leadership.

In return for their excellent service, the Navy promptly abolished the Wren boat crews at the end of the war, and no women joined the SRs until almost 50 years later.

Hayes, however, had a forgiving nature, and maintained her links with the Surveying Service, generously donating money to be shared between Hecla, Herald, and Hydra Welfare funds during the Falkands Conflict, having noticed that the main focus of the attention was on the warships rather than the survey vessels which had acted as ambulance ships.



● *Left: Scientific trawler HMS Daisy off Lowestoft in 1915*

In the hundred years since the specialisation for ratings was introduced, it is estimated that 1,500 ratings have served as Surveying Recorders.

Women today in the specialisation work alongside and carry out the same duties as men.

Techniques have changed enormously over the century – sounding machines have been replaced by echo sounders, electronic fixing has replaced sextants, and today's surveyors work almost exclusively with satellite navigation and global positioning systems.

Despite celebrating its centenary this year, the specialisation is in decline.

Its fate was sealed when the introduction of a new Warfare Branch specialisation was formally announced on January 16 2004 – the OM(HM)(U), or Operator Mechanic (Hydrographic, Meteorological and Oceanographic).

The new specialisation will eventually take over from the existing Surveying Recorder and Naval Airman Meteorological and Oceanographic specialisations – the former now known as AB(HM)s.

As the new intakes replace SRs, numbers of the oldest Navy establishment are dwindling.

The last SRs qualified in December 2003, and as of 6 July 2007 there were just 64 SRs left.

The youngest, AB(HM) Goldsworthy-Trapp, will retire from the Navy in May 2041 at the latest.

READY TO JOIN THE NAVAL CAREERS SERVICE?



The Captain of Naval Recruiting is currently seeking RN & RM WOs, Senior Rates and SNCOs to work as Careers Advisors at these locations:

Birmingham, Bristol, Cambridge, Chatham, Exeter, Ilford, Leicester, Peterborough.

- Enlist on Full Time Reserve Service
- Limited Commitment employment in a specified location
- For 3 years with prospects for further 2 year commitments
- FTRS rates of pay apply (reviewed annually and pensionable)

CA3 from £24,857 rising to CA1 up to £36,540 with effect from 1 April 06.

Regular Service Pensions will be abated so that your total remuneration will not exceed your basic pay on the last day of regular service.



For further information please contact:
Royal Navy School of Recruiting
PSTN: 01929 403172 MIL: 94374 3172



● *Able Seacat Fred Wunpound of survey ship HMS Hecate*

Putting the cat into Hecate

WUNPOUND – funny name, funny sailor.

LS (Leading Seacat) Fred Wunpound was the mascot of survey ship HMS Hecate, obtained for £1 from Plymouth RSPCA in 1966.

He was forced ashore in 1975 by anti-rabies laws – but not before he travelled more than a quarter of a million miles in Hecate – the equivalent of more than ten times round the world, giving him a fair claim for the title 'most-travelled cat'.

His main duty was mouse exterminator (and no one ever saw a mouse on board the ship), for which he was rewarded with a luxury wicker basket next to the gyro room – poor Fred never really got his sea legs.

On leaving the Navy Fred had two good conduct badges (and one disgraceful conduct badge – the so-called 'fish market incident' in Brixham).

Fred spent his last 15 months in peace in Taunton, and died in his sleep in 1976.

Navy News is indebted to former SR Lt Ian Austin RN (retd), of the HM Training Group in Plymouth, who has produced a history of the SR specialisation, from which this feature draws its material.

Bais Maritiem B.V.

BAIS MARITIEM B.V.
SINCE 1958

We are looking for qualified skippers for one of our close partners.

This professional company has an excellent reputation and is expanding its fleet of wind farm utility vessels. They now require keen and disciplined people to fulfil present and future manning requirements.

We are therefore looking to recruit current and ex-forces naval personnel to fill these positions.

Preference will be given to the Marine engineering and Seaman branches as well as Royal Marines due to the boat handling and engineering requirements of the vessels.

Are you interested in this new challenge and experience?

Don't hesitate and send your C.V. to our Personnel Manager, Ms. Lindsay Pein

Email: secretariaat@bais.nl

INPUT/OUTPUT

A world leader in the design and manufacture of land and marine seismic equipment has vacancies for a number of field service engineers based in their UK facility near Guildford.

I/O Field Service Engineers are highly skilled people who are required to carry out installations, testing, repair and maintenance of marine seismic systems. This role requires extensive overseas travel and time onboard vessels; this can often be at very short notice and for unspecified periods of time. Only people, who are happy with this nomadic lifestyle and are happy to work alone or part of a team should apply.

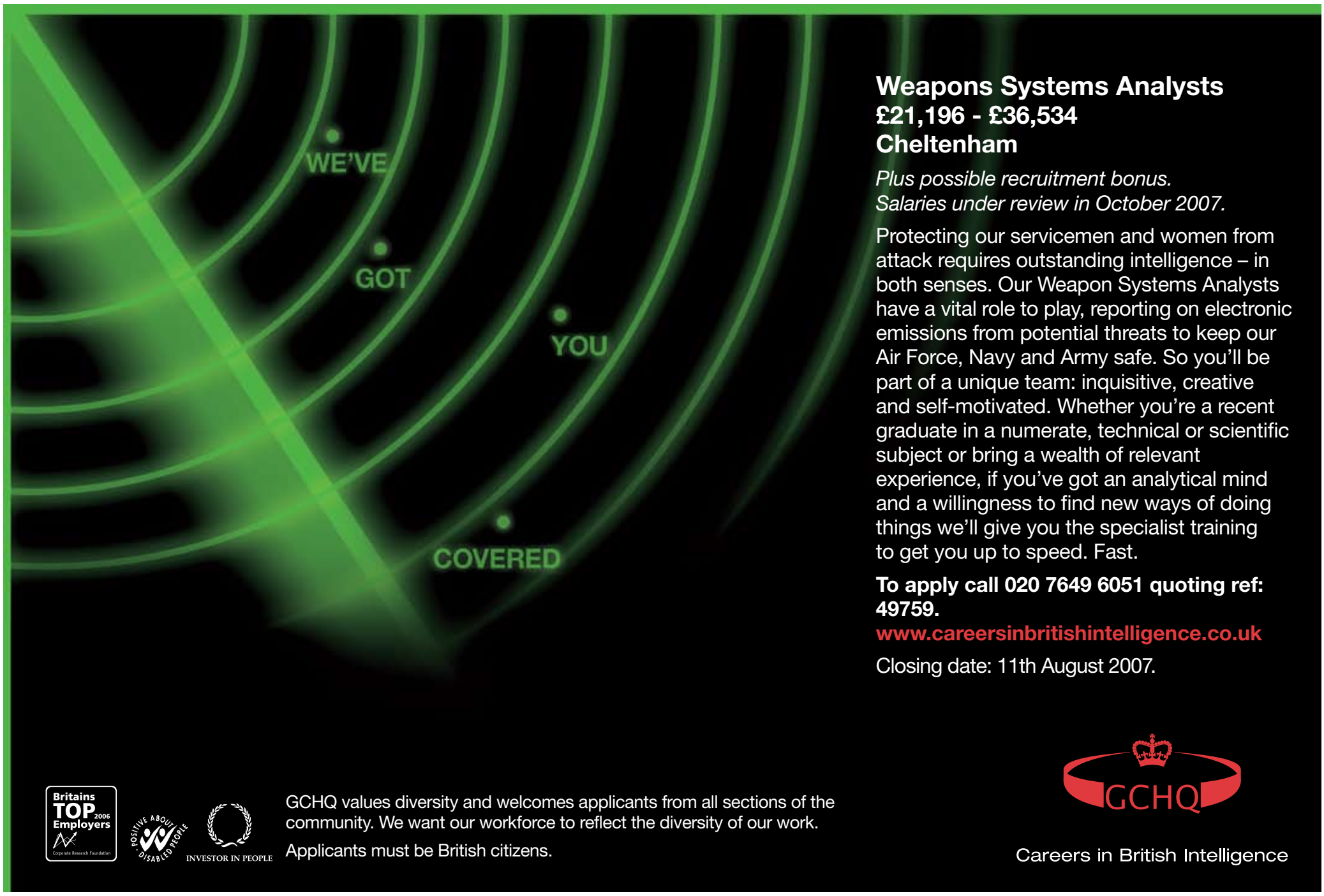
Experience of marine seismic data acquisition systems an advantage but full training will be given.

All positions offer a very attractive benefit packages including overtime, bonus scheme, health care and a generous pension package.

Applications in writing only together with a comprehensive CV to:

I/O Marine System Ltd, Little Mead Industrial Estate,Cranleigh, Surrey, GU6 8ND, or E mail **IOMS@i-o.com.**





Weapons Systems Analysts
£21,196 - £36,534
Cheltenham

Plus possible recruitment bonus.
Salaries under review in October 2007.

Protecting our servicemen and women from attack requires outstanding intelligence – in both senses. Our Weapon Systems Analysts have a vital role to play, reporting on electronic emissions from potential threats to keep our Air Force, Navy and Army safe. So you'll be part of a unique team: inquisitive, creative and self-motivated. Whether you're a recent graduate in a numerate, technical or scientific subject or bring a wealth of relevant experience, if you've got an analytical mind and a willingness to find new ways of doing things we'll give you the specialist training to get you up to speed. Fast.

To apply call 020 7649 6051 quoting ref: 49759.

www.careersinbritishintelligence.co.uk

Closing date: 11th August 2007.

Britains TOP 2006 Employers
Corporate Research Foundation

POSITIVE ABOUT DISABLED PEOPLE

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

GCHQ values diversity and welcomes applicants from all sections of the community. We want our workforce to reflect the diversity of our work.

Applicants must be British citizens.

GCHQ

Careers in British Intelligence

RECRUITMENT

Accounting / Book-keeping Qualifications

Distant Learning

IAB Level 2 & 3 Certificate in Book-keeping

IAB Level 3 Diploma in Accounting & Advanced Book-keeping

Computerised Accounts (Sage)

for details write to

Des Hynes & Co, Book-keeping Services
639 Wolseley Rd, Plymouth PL5 1JJ
Tel 01752 368949. e-mail: deshynes@aol.com



Navy News Notice To Readers

The publishers of Navy News cannot accept responsibility for the accuracy of any advertisement or for any loses suffered by any readers as a result. Readers are strongly recommended to make their own enquiries and seek appropriate commercial, legal and financial advice before sending any money or entering into any legally binding agreement.

Calling all Leading Medical Assistants

or above, are you qualified for the outside world? If not, we are offering HSE Approved Offshore Medic courses at £1,850 which will help you to get into the oil industry.



ELC 1646

Please contact our UK office on
01752 558080 www.interdive.co.uk

Ship Repair Opportunities

Organising Ship Repair requires dedicated professionals. We currently have the following vacancies for:

Estimator/Material Planning Engineer - £neg

With a constructive, weapons/electrical or support trades background, ideally marine based, you will be able to produce estimates for our wide range of engineering & ship support activities using MS office packages.

Please send your CV, including your salary expectations, to marine@matchtech.com or call 01489 898 160.

For more information on these and other exciting roles at FSL, please visit www.matchtech.com

FSL matchtech GROUP
human resources for a technical world

1450 Parkway, Solent Business Park, Fareham, Hampshire PO15 7AF

Ensure First Aid always comes first.

Mobile Training Instructor (First Aid)

- **£19,568 - £29,216 dependent on qualifications and experience**

It takes exceptional training to handle the advanced equipment our life-saving service relies on. And that's where you'll come in. You'll deliver First Aid training to lifeboat stations across the UK and Ireland. Along with a FAAW Instructor qualification (or equivalent), experience of delivering First Aid in a marine environment and seagoing experience will be essential. Naturally, your confident presentation skills will also be key.

Use your First Aid skills to ensure our crews are always safe at sea.

PRIDE, PURPOSE, PEOPLE. To find out more and apply, we encourage you to visit our online job opportunities area. If you don't have access to the Internet, you can request an application pack on 01202 663363, quoting the ref: COS_10197.

Closing date:19 August 2007.
Interview date: 3 September 2007.

www.rnli.org.uk/jobs

A charity registered in England, Scotland and the Republic of Ireland.

RNLI Lifeboats

Cape Verde Islands

Excellent investment opportunities: Apartments/Villas/Land.

Land available with planning from 18,000 pounds. For more information please contact Mark at Ohlsson Properties International (Ex Royal Navy).

Located in Sal, Cape Verde

00238 982 79 68 / 00238 242 10 39
or E Mail: **info@ohlssonproperties.com**

SIR JOSEPH ISHERWOOD LIMITED

Vacancy for Training Manager

Isherwoods, an international company producing innovative Ship Management and Integrated Logistic Support (ILS) Systems and Service, based in the North East of England, wish to recruit a Royal Navy Engineering or Seaman Branch Officer for the position of Training Manager, to develop and manage a comprehensive Operator and Maintainer Training programme for the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Navy's new class of Corvette. The training contract has a duration of approximately 60 months

Brief Job Description

- Develop and manage the training programme to time and budget;
- Recruit and manage the Isherwoods training team;
- Train and manage a team of UAEN Instructors;
- Prepare and undertake assessments of client trainees;
- Liaise with the Prime Contractor and UAEN on all matters pertaining to the training programme;

Brief Profile

- Minimum rank achieved whilst in service Lieutenant Commander;
 Engineering Branch applicants should have as a minimum, served as a WEO / MEO on a Frigate or Destroyer;
 Seaman Branch applicants should have as a minimum, served as an XO on a Frigate or Destroyer;
- Commercially aware with experience of controlling budgets;
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills;
- Experience in a training environment would be advantageous but not mandatory;
- Computer literate with extensive PC knowledge working in the Windows environment.

Benefits

- Salary commensurate with experience
- Private medical insurance
- Life insurance
- Excellent expatriate benefits package will apply whilst overseas

Application

Please apply in writing with CV, quoting Reference TME001, to:-

The Managing Director, Sir Joseph Isherwood Limited, Centre for Advanced Industry, Coble Dene, Royal Quays, North Shields, Tyne & Wear NE29 6DE.

Or Email: recruitment@isherwoods.com



VT Aerospace

Search and Rescue – Sea King Integrated Operational Support

Boulmer, Chivenor, Leconfield, Lossiemouth, Valley, Wattisham

VT Group is a major support services and shipbuilding company supplying services and products to governments, government agencies and businesses worldwide. The group employs over 14,000 people and has a turnover of approximately £1 billion. VT Aerospace as part of the VT Group has been meeting the high demands of Air Forces and military customers for over seventy years.

The Search and Rescue (SAR) Force provides around the clock Search and Rescue covering the whole of the UK and the Falkland Islands.

The Sea King Integrated Operational Support (SKIOS) SAR maintenance contract will provide civilian manpower substitution for current military maintenance personnel servicing the current fleet of RAF Sea King Mk3/3a and Royal Navy Sea King Mk5.

This is an excellent opportunity to join a global company in one of the following positions at the UK locations listed above.

Shift Supervisors up to £28K
Senior Technicians (Mechanical) up to £27K
Senior Technicians (Avionics) up to £27K
Technicians (Cross trade) up to £24K
Survival Equipment Supervisors up to £25K
Survival Equipment up to £23K
Logisticians up to £23K
Ground Crew Personnel up to £19K

For all roles, we offer a competitive salary, generous pension scheme, life assurance, holiday and a flexible benefits scheme that allows you to purchase discounted products and services. Additionally, training and development is offered to individuals.

If you are interested in any of the above positions, please send your CV and covering letter clearly stating which position and location you are interested in to: **SKIOS Recruitment, VT Aerospace, 1 Enterprise Way, Bournemouth Airport, Christchurch, Dorset BH23 6BS** or e-mail: **skios-recruitment@vtplc.com Tel: 01202 365210**

Or alternatively please contact the SKIOS Recruitment team either by telephone or email to request an application form.

To find out more about all our positions and company, please visit the company website www.vtplc.com

Closing date for applications is 9 August 2007

SKIOS
Sea King Integrated Operational Support

VT Aerospace

www.vtplc.com/aerospace

MISCELLANEOUS

WALL SHIELDS OF ROYAL NAVY SHIPS



Hand painted on wooden base 6in x 7in
£40.65 including UK postage and packing
REDUCE PRICES given for orders of **3** or more
SPECIAL PRICES given for 10, 25, 50 and 100
CRESTED TIES TO YOUR OWN SPECIAL DESIGN
(minimum 36)
specialist experience over 85 years
C.H.MUNDAY LTD
Oxford House, 8 St Johns Road,
St Johns, Woking, Surrey GU21 7SE
Telephone: 01483 771588 Fax: 01483 756627
email: enquiries@chmunday.co.uk www.chmunday.co.uk

GOLD WIRE BLAZER BADGES & HAND PAINTED WALL SHIELDS

(Select any ship or F.A.A. Squadron etc.)

CAP BADGES, SWORD KNOTS, BAGS AND BELTS, BUTTONS, PACE/RACING STICKS - 36" INDIAN ROSEWOOD (SCREW FITTING) WITH CARRYING CASE AND TIES (RN or F.A.A.)

Should there be any item you require which is not shown, please contact us, and we will endeavour to help, as we are unable to list all the products in our portfolio. Whether you are buying for yourself, or a loved one, we will be happy to give you prices and quantity discounts upon application.

Military Matters
7 Waterside, Greenfield, Saddleworth, Oldham OL3 7DP
Tel: 01457 877010 Fax: 01457 877010 e-mail:military.matters@btopenworld.com





PERSONAL

SAILMATCH

Seeking Romance?
Seeking Crew?
Look No Further!
Join Sailmatch Today!
www.sailmatch.com



PENFRIENDS

Don'twanttobe lonelythisyear?

Findnewfriendstosharelifesexperienceswith!
It'ssoeasy!Simplyfollowtheinstructionsbelow...
...tofindnewfriendsalloverthetheworld!

Name:
Address:
Tel No: Age:

IAMA51YealoldwidowandIwould like a female penfriend. Box Aug 1

IAMLOOKINGforaScottishpenfriends. Hobbies: riding, writing, history. Box Aug 2

NAVALWIDOW,69.House/Carowner, widelytravelled.Wouldliketomeet nice gent for a sincere friendship. Box Aug 3

SINGLE FIT MALE Sailor, 43, no ties. Seeks similar lady. Box Aug 4

MALE NEARLY FORTY. Seeks good times,fun/friendshipormaybemore with similar female. Box Aug 5

SINGLE SLIM PROFESSIONAL lady. Seekingmaletowarmlonelynights. GSOH,genuinerepliesonly.BoxAug6

HOW TO ADVERTISE

How to advertise: Simply write your message (£10 for up to 10 words. Each extra word £1 to a maximum of 15 words). Send your cheque or PO payable to 'Navy News' to: 'Penfriends', Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH. Replies to your box number will be forwarded on. HOW TO REPLY: Any person who writes to an advertiser must use a stamped envelope bearing the advertisers box number clearly in the bottom left hand corner. The letter should then be enclosed in a second envelope and addressed as above. We cannot guarantee that unstamped letters will be redirected.

NOTICE

All advertisements submitted for entry into the Navy News Penfriend Column are subject to copy approval. Navy News reserves the right to make any amendments which it considers necessary or to edit copy which is in excess of the number of words paid for. Please note: We can take no responsibility for the nature or source of the replies received. All replies are forwarded to you unopened. We therefore advise that you enter into correspondence with caution. Do not give out your address/telephone number until you feel comfortable with your new friend. If you arrange to meet, inform a friend of your whereabouts and always meet in a public place. Trust your instincts and do not meet again if you have any doubts. You must be over 18 years old to advertise in this column.

LOST MEDALS



REPLACED IN RECORD TIME
FULL SIZE & MINIATURE
3 DAY MOUNTING SERVICE
WRITE OR PHONE FOR QUOTATION
RAYMOND D. HOLDICH
Trafalgar Square Collectors Centre
7 Whitcomb Street, London WC2H 7HA
TEL 020 7930 8836 FAX 020 7930 1152
e mail:rdhmedals@aol.com www.rdhmedals.com



BUSINESS FOR SALE

PROFITABLE BUSINESS FOR SALE

T/O £50,000 – 70% gross profit

Very low overheads - Scope for significant growth

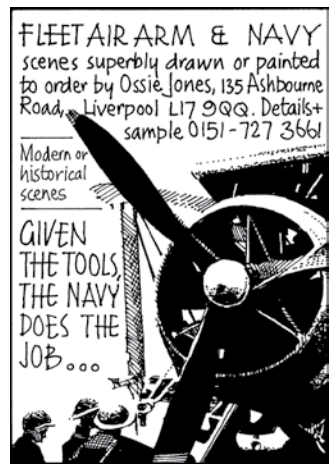
Run from home & and a large Garage • Delivering Water Coolers and Bottled Water to local businesses Hants/Dorset/Wilts • Owner retiring

OIRO £55,000

Contact: Alexander Hall, Accountants
01329 235995

17 FLIGHT SAFETY CALENDARS

1979 - 1999
(10 "Tugg"). Offers.
07789997710



ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

National Helpline:
0845 769 7555

No Waffle!

Quality Clothing at the Right Price.
Embroidered or Printed, Polo's, T-shirts, Sweatshirts, Baseball Caps, Sports Clothing, MotorSport Jackets, Zippo Lighters, Glassware, Silverware, Mugs, ID Badges etc.
We're your 'One Stop Promotional Shop'!!
Also available, Diego Garcia Crested Clothing!
JoBlaine Mugs & Promotions of Plymouth
Tel: 08450 580637
Fax: 08450 580647
Mobile: 07905 552318
E-mail: sales@joblaine.com
www.joblainepromotions.com

GOLDWIRE BADGE CO

GOLDWIRE BADGES-ALL SHIPS ETC	£14.00
WHITE LEATHER GAUNTLETS	£24.00
LEATHER STANDARD CARRIERS	£25.00
GOLD CORDS SET FOR STD.	£28.00
STANDARD CARRYING CASE	£25.00
BRASS INSERTS	£16.00
WHITE COTTON GLOVES	£8.00
WHITE MASONIC GLOVES WITH LOGO	£7.50
NAVY / BLACK BERETS 6¾" - 8	£8.00
ANY ASSN BERET BADGE	£8.00
R.N. & NAVAL DIVISION TIES	£13.50
R.N. BOW TIES	£13.50
BLACK CLIP-ON TIES	£8.00
R.N. BUTTONS - LARGE/SMALL	£1.50
STANDARD POLE BRASS FINIALS, R.N.A., R.M.	£28.00
RNA BRANCH SHOULDER TITLES (PAIR)	£16.00
SHIPS CAP TALLIES, GOLDWIRE	£8.00
VETERANS CAR SUN VISORS	£16.00
EMBROIDERED GARMENTS	
POLO SHIRTS	£14.50
WHITE PILOT SHIRTS R.N.A., R.M.	£15.00
SWEATSHIRTS R.N.A., R.M., NAVY, GREY,	£17.50

SEND FOR FREE LIST

Royal Marines Pith Helmets	from £75.00
Officers Cap Badges	£13.50
Gold Sword Knot	£10.50
Leather Sword Belts	£70.00
Sword Bags	£13.00

ALL UK ORDERS UNDER £39.99 £2.50 P&P
IT, Bridford Drive, Oldham, Lancs. OL8 2AT
Tel/Fax 0161 628 8842
www.regimentalbadges.co.uk
E-mail: sales@regimentalbadges.co.uk

ROYAL NAVAL MN ITEMS WANTED













Good prices paid for quality pieces

HMS bells, deck plates, brass badges, battle honours boards, presentation items, wardroom silver, swords, instruments, diving watches and equipment, Nelson related items, etc.

David Bond Tel: 01803 835092
Email: nauticalantiques@tiscali.co.uk

WORCESTERSHIRE MEDAL SERVICE LTD



Specialists in Medals and Medal Mounting.
56 Broad Street, Sidemoor, Bromsgrove, Worcs B61 8LL
Tel: 01527 835375 Fax: 01527 576798
Local Rate UK Only: 0845 6582001

MEDALS PROFESSIONALLY MOUNTED COURT OR ORDINARY STYLE.
FULL SIZE REPLACEMENT AND MINIATURE MEDALS SUPPLIED.
MEDALS DISPLAYED. RIBBONS AND ACCESSORIES ALSO AVAILABLE.
SEND SAE FOR LATEST CATALOGUE

Order online using our secure website www.worcmedals.com
E-mail us at wms@worcmedals.com

REGIMENTAL TIES, blazer Badges, Cuff-Links, Buttons, Medals, Cap Badges, Militaria. £2.00 for list. Cairncross (Dep. NN), 31, Belle Vue St., Filey, N. Yorks YO14 9HU. **Tel: 01723 513287**
Email: george.cairnxson@hotmail.co.uk

Paintings of a particular ship, carried out by maritime artist, in either watercolour or oil, at reasonable prices which include framing.
Details: **Don Bryan (01744) 20243**
email: don.bryan.7@virgin.net



GOES DIGITAL

Via our website you can now read the e-edition of the paper.
Simply go to
www.navynews.co.uk
and click on the link on the right hand side of the home page.
Take a good look, you will be amazed at the quality.

NAVY NEWS AT YOUR FINGERTIPS WORLDWIDE



Music from the Ceremonies of Beating Retreat and Tattoo

27 historic recordings, the best of the Royal Marines. Included are *Sunset, Crimond, Jerusalem, Land of Hope and Glory, Crown Imperial, Heart of Oak, A Life on the Ocean Wave, By Land and Sea, Rule Britannia, Emblazoned Drums, Mechanised Infantry, Sambre et Meuse, The Captain General, Viscount Nelson, Nightfall in Camp* and many more. This CD brings together the majesty and excellence of the Band of HM Royal Marines School of Music under the baton of their distinguished first Principal Director of Music, Lieutenant Colonel Sir Vivian Dunn.

Compact Disc £12.00 (UK), £15.00 (overseas) incl p & p
Make cheques payable to **Eastney Collection**
Eastney Collection, 60 Mayford Road, London SW12 8SN
tel: 020 8673 6157; fax: 020 8772 9545; Email: eastneycol@aol.com
www.eastneycollection.com (most credit cards accepted)
A donation from each recording sold will go to the Deal Memorial Bandstand Trust Registered Charity No. 1045095



● *ACs Ryan Morley and Hannah Thompson are escorted from HMS Campbeltown's Lynx*

Six join the fun at Kiel festival

LOUGHBOROUGH cadets have been putting in some serious sea time over the past month or two.

Nine cadets and two members of staff spent a day sailing between Poole and Portsmouth in the unit's affiliated ship, HMS Quorn.

The cadets were accommodated the night before by their compatriots from the **Poole** unit.

On arrival in Portsmouth the group toured HMS Victory before heading back to the Midlands.

Six members of the unit, four of them cadets, ventured further afield when they took up an invitation to join frigate HMS Campbeltown in Kiel, Germany.

A five-hour flight delay meant a rather shorter time in Germany than planned, but they still managed to enjoy the live music and food of the Kiel Festival.

The cadets willingly took on a number of ship's duties, with AC Ryan Morley helping chefs prepare the Captain's dinner and AC Samantha Mitchell testing the firefighting equipment.

All six were tested on weapon-handling skills as the frigate passed through the Kiel Canal.

One highlight was a flight in Springer, the ship's helicopter.

S/Lt Kay Adey, the unit's Commanding Officer, said: "This was the opportunity of a lifetime for the cadets and staff.

"We are so grateful to everyone aboard HMS Campbeltown who were all enthusiastic and friendly, and many of whom went out of their way to ensure the cadets had a good time.

"LS Ritchie Bye was our host, and many of his duties were covered by his shipmates to allow him to spend time with us."

The unit also took part in the Giant BT Sleepover – 19 cadets and five staff stayed at their HQ – and has held its annual RN parade, at which new Trainee Instructor Mark Sykes raised £33 by having his hair cut off.



● *Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Adrian Johns with members of the Poole unit at his annual garden party in Portsmouth. Members of TS Drax supported the event by providing a band display at the Admiral's residence, Admiralty House in Portsmouth Naval Base, as well as forming a Guard and staging a display of marching*

Picture: AB(WS)1 Pentecost

Malvern heroes to the rescue

MALVERN cadets proved the heroes of the hour as flooding devastated parts of England.

The unit was due to host the South West Area 2nd Class Cook/Stewards Course, but as roads into the town became impassable the attendees were contacted and turned back in time.

As the area gradually became an island, the unit was left with plenty of resources – food, accommodation and staff – and were determined they should not go to waste.

So the unit contacted the County Council Emergency Planning Team at 9.15pm and made those resources available to the emergency services.

Unit chairman Bob Thomas takes up the story: "I also gave permission for all unit-held buoyancy aids and lifejackets to made available to the Fire Service and Mercia Inshore Search and Rescue.

"By midnight on Friday (July 20) around 60 stranded and exhausted children and adults had been rescued and delivered by the police, and were ensconced in a warm and friendly Sea Cadet unit with hot food, hot drinks, toilets, showers, and camp beds.

"By 2am the numbers had swelled to over 100, including two pregnant ladies – one 34 weeks and the other not far behind.

"Fortunately soon after their arrival a doctor turned up, followed by a surgeon and his family of four, and then a paramedic, all trapped by the floods.

"We continued to receive rescued people throughout the early hours, some who had waded chest deep to get to safety from trapped cars and had no dry clothing broke down in tears as soon as they arrived, our act of kindness to strangers being more than they could bear.

"Many were in shock and all were emotionally drained.

"Staff utilised the full resources of the unit, and not one person in need was turned away.

"Unfortunately some had to spend the night sat in a chair as every camp bed, mattress or roll mat had been taken up. Some families were three to a camp bed.

"The unit's stock of food was exhausted, all five fridges and three freezers were emptied.

"I gave authority for more to be purchased as soon as local stores were opened, and a shopping crew spent nearly two hours queuing at the local supermarket for essential supplies – panic buying had started early.

"Around 9am a relief crew was organised to take over those who had worked to the point of exhaustion, having set up dozens of camp beds, moved most of the unit furniture into the compound area to make sleeping room, served hot drinks, various snacks and then over 100 cooked breakfasts, starting at 5am and serving till 7am, when all had been fed.

"Lt Barber set up an OS map area for drivers to view.

"This deflected the minds of drivers away from negative thoughts and allowed them to make positive plans of escape should any road around Malvern reopen – this proved extremely helpful to morale.

"I managed to get a direct line to the police control centre and was able to brief our guests regularly on an accurate state of play.

"Things moved really fast – landslides, fallen trees and parts of roads washed away were the norm and happened quicker than they could be reported by local radio.

"A police sergeant who I know came up and told me, 'Bob, if you hadn't opened up your unit I don't know were we would had taken them – there just wasn't anywhere left to go.'

"Emergency service crews also popped in throughout the night to have a well-earned cuppa, some food and a break from the chaos that reigned.

"One extremely mad night and an awful lot of people extremely grateful to our dynamic team.

"I am extremely proud of them all. Some of our unit staff, after being at work all day on the Friday, slogged on without complaint and no sleep for 28 hours.

"The unit and a team of volunteers continue to be on standby until stood down.

"There are so many stories to tell which will keep us going whilst sat around the fire on cold nights for years to come."

Scottish units help on river

CADETS from across the west of Scotland will use their specialist skills at this year's Clyde River Festival, scheduled to be staged as *Navy News* went to press.

This year's two-day festival, the third and largest so far, will involve ships of all sizes, including the Corps' flagship, TS Royalist.

As well as cadets crewing the Royalist, local teams will be responsible for delivering two of the main roles needed to make the festival run safely and smoothly.

Teams on the water and quaysides will be guiding visiting vessels up the Clyde, ensuring they dock safely in the right place.

This year cadets from **Airdrie, Campbeltown, Clydebank, East Kilbride, Glasgow, Helensburgh, Lochaber** and **Oban** are expected to be involved in the event.

Corps skills lead to diploma

SEA Cadets now have the opportunity to gain an internationally-recognised vocational qualification without doing any additional work outside their cadet engineering training.

The BTEC First Diploma in Engineering (Maintenance) offered by the Cadet Vocational Qualification Organisation is equivalent to four GCSEs (grades A*-C) or four Scottish Standard Grades, and is available to cadets over 16 who have completed the SCC marine engineering syllabus.

The Corps is unique amongst the Cadet Forces in offering a syllabus that develops the training, skills and knowledge that meet the criteria to gain the diploma.



Mike gives six decades to Cadets

A VOLUNTEER who has given more than 60 years to the Sea Cadets has retired.

Mike Myson (75), Community Officer of the **Bury St Edmunds** unit, joined the cadets in 1946 as a 14-year-old, and has been Community Officer for the past 47 years.

Although he should have retired at 60, no one else was willing or qualified to take over, and units cannot exist without a community officer.

Now someone has stepped into the breach – although Mike *(above)* is staying on as Boat Officer and Sailing Master, as sailing is one of his passions.

Mike, who runs a successful building company, teaches sailing two nights a week and at weekends in the summer, and he spends the winters maintaining the boats.

"We in Bury St Edmunds and surrounding areas owe Mike and his volunteers a big debt of gratitude," said Bryan Garnham.

"Mike has been our Nelson, and he has given 61 years of public service without fuss or remuneration."

around the units

THIRTEEN cadets and staff from **Northampton** provided the Guard of Honour at Bletchley Park to mark the 25th anniversary of the Falklands Campaign.

That same weekend **Wellingborough** Detachment cadets took part in the sponsored Wendle Walk.

CPO Tony Norman, who has devoted 12 years to TS Laforey, was presented with the Cadet Forces Medal by unit CO Lt (SCC) Chris Read RNR.

The unit has celebrated its 65th anniversary, having been formed during Warship Week 1942, with events including a formal dinner, a disco and a party.

The unit is seeking information on its history, particularly the years 1975 to 1981 – newspaper cuttings or photographs from this time would be gratefully received.

A LATE change of plan meant two London cadets had to turn south at Amsterdam instead of north – but they still got plenty out of their visit to HMS Roebuck.

They were due to meet the survey ship at Den Helder, with travel costs supported by the Worshipful Company of Scientific Instrument Makers.

But the rendezvous was switched to Ostend, where Roebuck attended the annual Festival of the Sea.

The cadets, PO Adebambo Salawu and AC Gary Weeks, then had a chance to take part in ship-board routines, and to train on the sea boat and guns before they arrived in Devonport.

MEMBERS of the Indefatigable Old Boys' Association (IOBA) travelled to East Sussex to see the Indefatigable Trophy handed to **Rye and District** as the most improved unit in the UK in 2006.

The presentation, including a cheque for £700, comes on the back of Rye teams going head-to-head in a national shooting contest – and taking the Shell Trophy for the third year running by beating the best Army and Air Cadets.

LC Amy Faulkner has been installed as the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports Cadet.

TAMESIDE has been awarded a grant totalling £5,570 to buy a new Laser Bahia sailing boat.

The Community Foundation for Greater Manchester grant means the unit can add a bigger boat to their fleet of four Laser Picos and two Laser Vagos.

POC Kate Sloman's seven years of dedication to the **Blackpool** unit has been recognised by the award of the Lord Lieutenant of Lancashire's Certificate of Merit.

Kate was commended for her leadership qualities as well as being a team player, and for taking on increasing responsibilities with minimal supervision.

AC ELANA Fitzgerald has received her prize as Swansea unit's Cadet of the Year.

First runner-up was OC Tristan Gjertson, and third place went to CPO Nigel Morton.

Best fundraiser for TS Ajax was Cadet James Cookson.

LC STEPHANIE Queen, a member of the **Stretford and Urmston** unit, has been awarded a Certificate of Merit by the Lord Lieutenant of Greater Manchester, Col Sir John Timmins.

TOBY Baker, of Oundle School CCF, won the Directors' Prize for his support of sailing and for charity work.

Toby organised a music festival which ran for eight days and raised £11,000 for a fishing boat to be used at a camp for homeless children in the Ukraine.

He trains cadets in sailing skills, and will pass the skills on to the Ukrainians when he leads a team out to show them how to get the best out of the new boat.

around the units

Visitors finally see the sea

A PARTY of seven land-locked cadets visited Whitehaven during the town's maritime festival – and for some it was their first glimpse of the sea.

The **Whitehaven** unit welcomed five sea cadets and two Marine cadets from the **Stoke-on-Trent** unit, and set out to make it a memorable occasion.

S/Lt (SCC) Harry Starkey RNR, TS Talent's First Lieutenant and a former Whitehaven resident, contacted Whitehaven to ask if he and his Commanding Officer, CPO (SCC) Bev Bostock, could bring a group to the International Maritime Festival.

"The response from Whitehaven was a very simple yes," said S/Lt Starkey.

"Basically, all they needed to know was how many cadets we would be bringing."

Whitehaven's CO, S/Lt (SCC) Keith Crowe RNR, said it had been a pleasure to have the TS Talent crew on board.

"We were told that several of the cadets had never even seen the sea before, and we were determined to make it a visit that they would enjoy and remember for a long time. I think we succeeded."

During the three days of the festival, the contingent from TS Talent took a cruise along the West Cumbrian coast on board the steamer MV Balmoral, courtesy of the festival's Chief Executive, Gerard Richardson.

"When our own cadet unit told us of the visit, it was our pleasure to welcome this group of young people to Whitehaven," he said.

"We felt that a cruise on board the Balmoral would be an appropriate gift from the Festival and I hope they enjoyed it."

The cadets also visited several of the tall ships, including Grand Turk, appeared on BBC TV's *Look North* programme, and on BBC Radio Cumbria – several times.

There were also VIP seats for the firework display.

But there was also a serious side to the weekend.

A guard of honour for a VIP event on board Grand Turk was provided jointly by two Whitehaven cadets and the two Marine cadets from Stoke.

Sunday saw a harbourside service commemorating the anniversary of the Falklands conflict.

"It was a very moving service," said CPO Bostock, "and we were privileged to have been a part of it."

At the end of the festival, S/Lt Crowe presented each of the Stoke cadets with 'competent crew pulling' and 'basic water safety' qualifications which they had earned during the weekend.

Whitehaven unit chairman Chas Tinkler added: "It was a real pleasure meeting the staff and cadets from TS Talent.

"They joined in enthusiastically and coped admirably with everything we threw at them.

"They are a real credit to themselves, their parents and their unit, and excellent ambassadors for Stoke on Trent.

"We wish them all well for the future and look forward to welcoming them back"

The Whitehaven cadets made such an impression on the Master of the Grand Turk, Capt Ian Macdougal, that he invited six to spend a day at sea as the tall ship sailed from Whitehaven to Silloth.

In addition, three of them were given the chance to spend a further three weeks on board, visiting Belfast, Chatham and Scarborough.





● *Cadets from Stoke in the sea at Whitehaven after gaining their basic water safety qualification (above), while two Whitehaven sea cadets and two Stoke Marine cadets provide a Guard of Honour for a VIP function on board the tall ship Grand Turk (left)*

Methil hosts cadets from across the Pond

METHIL and District unit had the privilege of hostying a visit by cadets from the United States Naval Sea Cadet Corps.

The American cadets were staying at HMS Caledonia in Scotland, along with two escorting officers.

They had already enjoyed a varied programme, including a visit to Type 42 destroyer HMS Exeter when the warship visited Dundee, and a trip to see the Wallace Monument at Stirling.

The orginal plan was for the cadets to also go kayaking under the care of the unit's civilian instructor, Alan Innes.

But with time running short, and the threat of lightning in the vicinity, and alternative had to be found.

The answer was a football (or soccer) and deck hockey tournament involving hosts and visitors.

Not only did it help sharpen skill levels, but it meant the youngsters worked up a sweat as well.

The evening culminated in the exchange of plaques, with an American escort officer handing over an engraved version as a token of gratitude, while Methil's Officer in Charge, CPO Gordon Squires, presented a TS Ajax crest.

The cadets also entered into the spirit, swapping gifts such as caps and pens as souvenirs of the visit.



● *Cadets line up along the route of the Duchess of Cornwall at the BAE Systems yard at Barrow-in-Furness*

Royal welcome

SEA Cadets were out in force at the launch of the Royal Navy's latest submarine, HMS Astute.

Members of the **Barrow-in-Furness**, **Kendal**, **Maryport** and **Helensburgh** units marched into position along with the RN Guard of Honour from HMS Astute.

Cadets lined the route for the royal sponsor, the Duchess of Cornwall, and many of the 100 cadets and staff were lucky enough to get a handshake and chat with the Duchess.

During the weekend of celebrations following the launch, sea cadets, along with their Army and RAF colleagues, staged a series of displays, including a field gun run.

They also took part in a Falklands memorial parade and watched a spectacular firework display, and with some 21,000 people visiting the yard during the weekend it meant valuable exposure for the units.

Cadets managed to fit in some boatwork, and visited HMS Lancaster and HMS Exeter, both of which were at Barrow for the weekend.

Skipper on the river

MEDWAY Towns cadets have just added a new 15ft Skipper motor launch to their fleet, thanks to a series of grants which will make it easier for members of the unit to undertake training.

After laying up their last displacement craft in 2006, cadets had to travel to other units and to Southern Area courses to train.

Awards for All provided £8,645, with £2,000 from the Rochester Bridge Trust, which when added to a previous grant from Medway Sports Trust allowed the unit to buy the launch and trailer.

Cadets have already had a look at the new arrival on the River Medway, and although it will be known officially as MTC (Medway Training Craft) George Ward, after one of the founder members of the Medway Sports Trust, the youngsters have decided it will be known simply as George.

Gold and silver

TWO members of the **East Kilbride** unit won medals at the Scottish National RYA Honda Youth Challenge event.

Cadet Alexander Wilson took the gold medal, while Junior Cadet Jack Cann won silver.

The unit's Field Gun team has also been in action, racing against the rest of the **Clyde North district** at St George's Square in Glasgow, supporting a senior RN race involving HMS Neptune and HMS Caledonia.

Corps Admiral pays a visit to Leith unit

LEITH unit were honoured with a visit by the Admiral of the Sea Cadet Corps, the Duke of York.

Prince Andrew was visiting Edinburgh to attend the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

But he managed to fit in a 40-minute visit to TS Howe, allowing him the chance to meet committee members, staff and unit supporters, and he spoke to each cadet as he toured the unit's facilities.

Before leaving, Prince Andrew presented the unit's 2006 Efficiency Pennant to cadet Peyton Murdoch, the youngest member of TS Howe.

During his week in Scotland, the Duke of York also visited the Lady Haig poppy factory in Edinburgh, and travelled to Inverness and Aberdeen.

The Leith unit HQ is at the Prince of Wales Dock (beyond the security gate), Leith Docks, and the group meets Tuesdays and Fridays between 7.30pm and 9.30pm.



● *The Duke of York presents the* **Leith** *unit's 2006 Efficiency Pennant to Cadet Peyton Murdoch*

St Andrews unit makes its debut

A NEW unit has been formed at **St Andrews** in Scotland.

A launch at the town's Madras College was the first major outing for the unit, which initially exists as a satellite of the well-established **Dundee** unit.

Its first home is at the St Andrews Sailing Club, but plans are already under way to find a temporary HQ before they move into something permanent.

The newly-created unit's Management Committee chairman, Lt Cdr Kit Streatfeild-James (retd), said: "This is a very exciting opportunity for young people in the St Andrews area.

"We are looking for boys and girls aged from 12 to 18 and we will provide them with the opportunity to learn the skills that are required at sea.

"And I can guarantee it will be fun.

"In addition, the Sea Cadets offer youngsters the chance for personal development and the opportunity to learn leadership skills – and these things can be essential in later life.

"Both parents and cadets will find that the Sea Cadets provide a brilliant source for developing all kinds of talents."

The new unit is also recruiting adult instructors and other helpers, particularly anyone with Sea Cadet experience, and would be happy to take donations of equipment. Induction evenings will start in the autumn.

Contact the unit on 01334 475348.

Top award for all-rounder Christine

CHRISTINE Lilley, of the **Eastern Area Trent District**, has won one of the five Duke of Westminster Awards for 2007.

POC Lilley, a member of the **Nottingham** unit, has represented the Corps on international exchanges to Russia and Korea.

She was awarded the Learning and Skills Council Prize, which recognises all-round excellence in cadet activity and service to the community.

Apart from her cadet career, Christine raises funds for the Poppy Appeal, Seafarers UK and for sufferers of Parkinson's Disease.

She was the Lord Lieutenant's Cadet for Nottinghamshire, was a member of the Guard of Honour for the Queen – and still manages to fit in schoolwork as well, achieving an impressive ten GCSEs.

Cardiff face field gun challenge

CARDIFF Sea Cadets again took the honours in the Volunteer Cadet Corps Field Gun competition at HMS Collingwood.

But the Welsh unit has been warned it faces stiff competition next time after a London unit made their debut this year.

Field Gun 100 Day attracted thousands of visitors to watch 18 senior teams battle it out for the coveted Brickwoods Trophy.

The HMS Collingwood Sea Cadet Corps Invitation Trophy requires crews of 19 cadets, boys and girls aged between ten and 18, to race with a 7pdr field gun and limber, weighing over 850lb in total, over a distance of 170 yards, carrying out a number of drills on the way, such as lifting the entire equipment and changing wheels from gun to limber.

TS Cardiff's crew won the SCC Invitation Trophy, and finished second overall in the entire VCC competition.

But the Welsh cadets are in the sights of the team from **Waltham Forest**.

TS Acorn only had three weeks training – about six hours in total – before the event, but learned lessons from their more experienced rivals and have promised a real taste of what East End cadets can achieve in 2008.

Cadets from **Tameside** also featured at the show, staging their window ladder display.

During the day one of Tameside's 'old hands' turned up to say hello – Steph Murphy, who was one of the ladder team until she left the unit last year, had just completed her Part 2 training at Collingwood.



● *Cardiff cadets take up the strain during Field Gun 100 Day at HMS Collingwood*

Gala dinner helps raise cash for ship



● *Hornchurch and Upminster cadets at the gala dinner*

A GLAMOROUS gala dinner in London has helped raise money towards a new power-training ship for the Sea Cadets.

More than 200 VIP guests gathered at the Drapers' Hall for a fund-raising evening in support of the TS Jack Petchey appeal.

And the good news is that, with more than £2 million earmarked, the organisation will soon be in a position to order the new vessel.

Drapers' Hall was the venue as the Master Draper, Christian Williams, named the MSSC as the Master's Charity for his year of office.

As well as the Company's donation of £10,000, individual members have also made substantial donations to the ship appeal – and its magnificent hall was also made available to the charity at minimal cost for this event.

Sea Cadets and Marine Cadets from **Tooting**, **Richmond** and **Hornchurch & Upminster** units greeted the guests on arrival, and the Navy Board Cadets from **London** and **Southern** Areas, Victoria Gallagher and Adam Montgomery, were on hand to lead the VIPs into dinner.

Principal guests included Jack Petchey, after whom the new ship will be named.

The MSSC launched a £2.5 million appeal in 2006 to mark its 250th anniversary, and this spring the Jack Petchey Foundation pledged to donate £1 million so long as matching funds were raised by October this year.

Within weeks other major donations had been secured.

Now the process of designing, ordering and building the TS Jack Petchey has begun.

Other guests included Dame Mary Richardson, of the HSBC Education Trust; and Mr Alan Grieve, Chairman of the Council of the Jerwood Foundation, which funded the MSSC's existing power-training vessel, TS John Jerwood.

There were speeches from First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Jonathon Band, specialist in maritime law Mr Justice David Steel and Appeal Director Robert Woods.

The Bishop of London, the Rt Rev Richard Chartres, said grace, and musicians from the Royal Marines School of Music performed before, during and at the close of dinner.

Guests had the opportunity to place bids in a silent auction throughout the evening, with lots ranging from wine from the Lord Mayor of London's reserve to a flight for one in one of the world's most famous aircraft, a Spitfire.

The evening raised £113,000 after all expenses had been paid.

This means that the total raised since the appeal was launched a year ago stands at almost £2.3 million.

With the target of £2.5 million now so close, it is hoped that the order for the TS Jack Petchey will be placed this autumn, which would mean her coming into service in 2009.

The 24-metre TS John Jerwood, which entered service in 2002, has berths for 12 people, and has proved so popular that she is seriously over-subscribed.

TS Jack Petchey will be of similar design to TS John Jerwood, but with 16 berths.

It is expected she will take two years to build, and over an anticipated lifespan of 15 years she will train 16,000 youngsters.

The new ship will be berthed at the RNR Training Centre, HMS President, in the heart of London close to Tower Bridge. over-subscribed.



● *Guests enjoy the gala dinner in the Drapers' Hall*



● *Cadets from TS Bacchante at* **Burgh Castle** *yomp across the North York Moors*

Marine cadets yomp for anniversary

MARINE and Sea Cadets from across the country took part in yomps to mark the 25th anniversary of the Falklands conflict.

The term 'yomp' was first coined by members of the amphibious task group in 1982 to describe their 70-mile march over rough terrain from San Carlos to Stanley in bitter winds and snow, carrying over 54kg in their rucksacks, made necessary by a lack of helicopters after the sinking of the Atlantic Conveyor.

The Cadet yomps in 2007 were a rather more civilized 10-12 miles and took place in locations as diverse as Central London, Sunderland Cenotaph, Dartmoor, Portrush Cenotaph, Dundee and even Knowsley Safari Park.

Aged between 13 and 18, Marine Cadets study military history as part of their core training in marine cadet detachments within the Sea Cadet Corps.

These 25th anniversary yomps helped to bring alive the story of the Falklands campaign, with which they are all familiar.

Exam problems sorted by college

A SAILOR sitting a crucial exam while deployed to the Caribbean had chosen wisely when it came to which college to choose.

AET Gareth Reid, of HMS Ocean, had been advised by a friend to opt for The Marine Society & Sea Cadets' College of the Sea, being familiar with the vagaries of a sailor's life.

The ship visited Trinidad as planned – but Gareth's exam papers had not arrived in the mail.

He emailed Wendy Francis at the College, but Wendy had already started to sort out the problem, obtaining an electronic version to email to the ship – a first for the exam board and for HMS Ocean.

"I have the utmost thanks and appreciation for the College, and for the extreme dedication to produce results, no matter what," said Gareth.

Wendy, MSSC Education and Adult Learning Manager, said the papers had been sent in good time, but they found out about the problem the day before the exam.

"After a few frenzied phone calls, we arranged for the papers to be transmitted electronically to the ship in PDF format," said Wendy.

"Concurrently, the captain of HMS Ocean, hearing of the sailor's plight, diverted the ship close enough to shore to despatch a helicopter to Puerto Rico, where the exam papers, with our help, had been tracked down.

"In the end, the original papers were flown in in time to sit the exam in the usual way – the PDF route was not required."

The college is also launching an OU Foundation Degree in Working with Young People this September.

Open to all adults in the Sea Cadets, there are also scholarships available – contact Wendy Francis on 020 7654 7050 for more information.

around the units

WHITEHAVEN cadets took part in the annual Mayor's Parade, which takes place around the incoming mayor's home parish and ends with a service at a local church.

The parade, around the streets of Mirehouse, saw the unit include the first two recruits to their fledgling Marine Cadet detachment.

AC MICHAEL Marr, of the Arbroath unit, spent an evening at sea on exercise with the Brought Ferry lifeboat.

The planned helicopter element had to be abandoned when HMS Gannet's Sea King was called to an emergency.

But Michael will be able to get a close look at the aircraft shortly, as he was due to attend a Second Class Engineering Electrical course at Prestwick, home base for HMS Gannet, as *Navy News* went to press.

POC David Caddick, of **Sefton** unit, has received the Lord-Lieutenant of Merseyside's Certificate of Merit.

The citation for David's award described him as a "shining example of the kind of young citizen that the Sea Cadet Corps strives to produce."

From October 2006, he became First Lt and Unit Mentor for cadets at Sefton about to undertake advanced training to Leading rate or PO at TS Starling.

THE newly-formed Royal Marine Cadet Detachment of the Hinckley unit were given a boost to their training when the Royal Marines paid a visit.

The Marines spoke about life as a Royal Marine, the training they undertake and the career opportunities.

They answered questions and finished off the evening with an unarmed combat demonstration. The cadets were given the opportunity to have a go, under the watchful eye of the Royal Marines and staff of TS Amazon Marine Cadet Detachment.

around the units

Instructors needed

CHATHAM Marines unit is urgently seeking instructors to help train cadets.

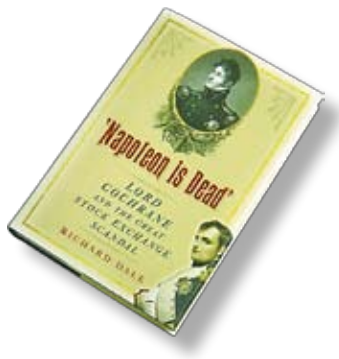
A Service background would be useful, but not essential as all training skills can be taught.

Unit chairman Bill Stephney said: "The job is unpaid but gives much satisfaction in the knowing that our instructors are producing citizens of tomorrow who will have the benefit of our training."

The unit is based within the Royal Engineers barracks at Chatham and meets on Tuesday and Thursday evenings between 7.30pm and 9.30pm.

Some activities also take place at weekends – but any help would be gratefully received.

Anyone who can might be able to give up some time, even for just one evening a week, should contact Bill on 01622 719901.



Naval hero... and conman?

AFTER Nelson, Thomas, Lord Cochrane is one of the best-known personalities of the early 19th-Century Royal Navy, *writes Dr Colin White of the Royal Naval Museum*.

Highly controversial and colourful, he was not only a distinguished naval commander, but also an ingenious inventor and a freedom fighter who played a leading role in the emancipation of Chile from Spanish rule.

So renowned was he for recklessness that when, aged 79, he applied to command the British fleet at the outbreak of the Crimean War in 1854, he was turned down because his "adventurous spirit might lead to unfortunate results"!

Like Nelson, Cochrane has been the subject of many books – including fiction, for it has even been claimed that he was the model for both Forester's Hornblower and O'Brian's Aubrey.

But Richard Dale's **Napoleon is Dead! Lord Cochrane and the Great Stock Exchange Scandal** (*Sutton*, £20 ISBN 978-0750943819) is unlike any of its rivals. For it focuses on one extraordinary event in Cochrane's long and complex life.

Using new evidence from original trial papers, Dale, a barrister and professor of finance, painstakingly reconstructs this extraordinary scam, when a syndicate of investors persuaded the Stock Exchange that Napoleon had been defeated and killed, thus creating a dramatic rise in government bonds that yielded them some impressive profits.

Accused of being one of the fraudsters, Cochrane was found guilty after a dramatic and highly controversial trial.

However, eventually, after a long battle, he managed to clear his name and have his naval rank reinstated.

But did he actually do it after all? Richard Dale thinks that he did – and he advances some persuasive evidence in support of his contention.

He writes well, and brings the original plot, and the subsequent trial, vividly to life.

Not much naval history here – but an interesting sideline on an ever-fascinating naval character.

Covers recall Falklands

A SERIES of limited edition covers has been produced by the Royal Naval Philatelic Society to commemorate victory in the Falklands 25 years ago.

All covers contain a text sheet and photocards of all the Falkland Islands memorials to the fallen and have been cancelled by the Falkland Islands Philatelic Bureau on June 14 – the anniversary of liberation in 1982.

The covers range in price from £7.75-25.75 depending on the number/value of stamps and signatures.

The society has also commissioned commemorative covers to celebrate the arrival of new Falkland Islands patrol ship HMS Clyde and the 50th birthday of Northwood RNR unit HMS Wildfire.

The covers are available from Royal Naval Philatelic Society, 19 College Road, HM Naval Base Portsmouth PO1 3LJ, or enquiries@rnphilatelic.org

Loch, stock and barrels

The Grove Review

READERS may remember my favourable review of Brian Lavery's recent book on Churchill's Navy.

Now he has rapidly followed it with another important work, **Shield of Empire: The Royal Navy in Scotland** (*Birlinn*, £30 ISBN 978-1-84158-5130), *writes Eric Grove, Professor of Naval History at the University of Salford*.

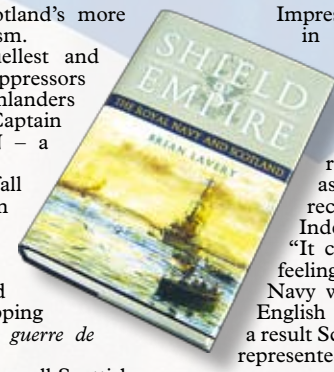
As a Scotsman, there is no-one better placed than Brian to tell the story of the often uneasy relationship of the northern kingdom with what, since 1707, has been its navy as well as England's.

Even before full union in 1707, the Union of the Crowns in 1603 and the Cromwellian conquest meant that Scots were caught up in English Royal maritime affairs.

Scottish seamen had been called upon by Charles I to man his ships against Spain in the 1620s. In the 1630s when Charles' ecclesiastical reforms caused much of Scotland to revolt (Brian says because of the attempt to impose bishops; in fact the bishops were already there, the dispute was initiated by liturgical reform), major amphibious operations were planned by the king but never executed.

Much of the early part of the book is a fascinating description of the maritime dimensions of the civil conflicts that raged between the Stuarts and their enemies until the middle of the 18th Century. Brian rightly makes the point that the Jacobites (the supporters of the Stuart kings after their dispossession in 1688), were regarded by most Scots with the same distaste as by most Englishmen – probably more so given Scotland's more extreme protestantism.

One of the cruellest and most infamous suppressors of the Jacobite highlanders in 1746 was Captain John Ferguson RN – a Scotsman.



It was after the fall of the Stuarts in 1696 that Scotland commissioned a small fleet of its own to defend its merchant shipping against the French *guerre de course*.

There were three small Scottish warships Royal William, Royal Mary and Dumbarton Castle. The trio passed into the newly-formed British Royal Navy in 1707; Dumbarton Castle kept her name, one that has been used since by HM ships, the other two became HMS Glasgow and HMS Edinburgh, precursors of distinguished lineages.

Brian mentions the birth of the contemporary 'Scottish navy' of fishery protection vessels in the early 20th Century. Perhaps there should have been more on the growth and growing responsibilities of this interesting and often forgotten flotilla.

The relatively impoverished 18th-Century Scots saw the Royal Navy as a path to economic and social advancement and integration into the new British state. This gives Brian an opportunity to display his great expertise in the 18th-Century Royal Navy to explain the impact of Scots on the service, the importance of Scottish officers like Duff, Duncan, Barham, Keith and Cochrane.

Impressment, dubious in Scots law, was not resorted to in Scotland until 1755 and in Brian's words "it never really worked as a means of recruiting there". Indeed he argues: "It contributed to a feeling that the Royal Navy was a predatory English institution." As a result Scots were under-represented in Nelson's navy.

The Royal Navy's connections with Scotland atrophied post-1815 with a service based in the South of England and with important cultural differences unrecognised (RN Church of Scotland Chaplains were only fully accepted in 1943!).

The tide began to turn in the latter part of the century with the reorganised coastguard providing a naval presence around Britain, and, more importantly, the new Royal Naval Reserve, that provided a useful source of income for crofter fishermen.

By 1902 there were fifty percent as many Scots in the RNR as Englishmen, a proportion far greater than the relative population sizes. A static ratings training ship was also brought from Plymouth to the Forth, HMS Caledonia, but it was short-lived and boys training went south again; the name was only revived for the static artificers' training ship (the former liner Majestic) in 1937.

The long conflict with Germany brought Scottish bases to the front of the Admiralty's mind but that at Rosyth was never completed to the extent originally proposed and it never became a base port alongside Portsmouth, Plymouth and Chatham.

Much of the book covers the period of both World Wars. In WW1, the Grand Fleet operated from Scapa Flow, Cromarty and Rosyth, while the Clyde became a key base area for shipping protection in WW2.

Scapa was crucial again but a terrible price was paid for the neglect of its defences with the loss of the battleship Royal Oak to Gunther Prien's U-47.

The book is noteworthy for its sketches of significant events, such as Prien's successful attack.

The description of Invergordon is one of the best brief accounts available. One aspect Brian brings out is how the enforced return to home ports completely disrupted officers' plans to have time ashore with their families, as had become the custom.

The book comes up to date with a slightly patchy and unbalanced account of the post-war period with a great deal of detail about Holy Loch (that is really Scotland and the US Navy). More might have been put in about Scotland's absolutely key naval role in the Cold War period, such as the Joint Maritime Courses (JMCs) which are only mentioned when they moved to Faslane.

Although most important Scottish developments are covered and there is some discussion of the future and the effects of devolution, there is no mention of the likely assembly of the giant new aircraft carriers at Rosyth.

I must declare an interest in reviewing *Shield of Empire*. Some time ago I read some early drafts of parts of the book in order to give advice on the periods with which I was more familiar than Brian, particularly the 20th Century.

This advice was duly given – and I can see echoes of it in the final product – but the book has developed much since and I feel able to approach it with as much objectivity as I can, given my long and happy professional relationship with its distinguished author.

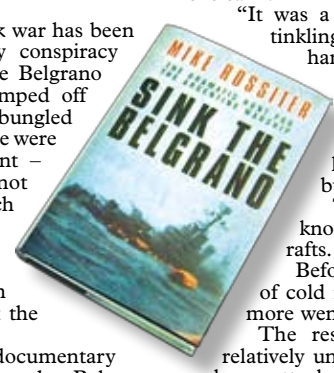
The blemishes in this book are all small and niggling. Engineering training was at Keyham in Plymouth before it went to Manadon. The little suburb of Aberdeen at the mouth of the Dee mentioned as being assessed for seamen in the 17th Century was indeed 'Futtie' (or 'Fittie'); the name came from local Saint Fittick. Its translation as 'Footdee' in Victorian times is probably an error.

Some, like arming HMS Harvester with "four 4 to 7in guns", are clearly misprints. Some of the pictures might have been better captioned. It ought to have been made clear that it was the new Fisher period 'Home Fleet' that is pictured at Scapa (a very interesting shot of which much could have been made); the well-known picture of the German battleship seen being scuttled a little later in the same anchorage is clearly not of the mis-spelled 'Derflinger' – that in any case was a battlecruiser.

None of this detracts significantly from an excellent, accessible and informative book that should attract a wide readership, by Scots and others alike.

Conquerors and conquered

After breathing fresh life into the legendary Ark Royal III, Mike Rossiter has turned his attention to the Falklands and the duel between HMS Conqueror and an Argentine cruiser in Sink the Belgrano (*Bantam*, £17.99 ISBN 978-0-593-05842-8).



No single incident in the six-week war has been more obfuscated and distorted by conspiracy theorists convinced Mrs T sank the Belgrano to win an election; her agents bumped off an anti-nuclear campaigner in a bungled burglary, log books disappeared, there were misleading statements to Parliament – most of which was down to blunder not deceit (including the break-in which was indeed a bungled burglary).

Of course, most of the accusations and recriminations came from those who'd never been to war... but then the media has a habit of looking at the world in black and white.

Mike Rossiter is a media man, a documentary producer-cum-author, but he views the Belgrano incident for what it was: a dramatic – and tragic – story of war at sea.

For beneath the layers of a conspiracy theory there is a damn good story to tell, one told in an admirably-balanced fashion by Rossiter, who interviewed the protagonists of both sides.

And what is revealing is the high morale among the Belgrano's crew, heading to war in a WW2-vintage cruiser against a Navy with a tradition second-to-none. Old though the Belgrano was, her men had faith in her.

Such confidence might have evaporated had they known that Conqueror was on her way – and just how well honed her crew were.

CO Cdr Christopher Wreford-Brown and his XO Lt Cdr Tim McClement whipped their men into shape with 18 hours of training a day. *Desire peace, prepare for war...* By the time the boat had reached the environs of the Falklands, "we knew each other's dreams" recalled PO Graham Libby.

This is more than a story of cruiser versus submarine, however.

Equally gripping is Conqueror's role in the re-capture of South Georgia, and especially the bravery of two deeps who braved biting winds and ferocious seas to fix a radio antenna. They were told to dispense with life jackets; if they were swept over the side they would never be found because the sea was so rough.

And so the Belgrano, the defining moment in Conqueror's career. There was initial euphoria as the submarine's torpedoes dealt a mortal blow to the aged cruiser.

And after the explosion, the consequences. On the sonar Graham Libby listened to ship breaking up as she sank.

"It was a noise we'd never heard before – a tinkling noise, like someone wafting their hand through a big glass chandelier. And it wasn't until the analysis of all the tapes afterwards that they realised, following the explosion and the fires and all that hot metal, it was like dousing a piece of hot metal in a bucket of water."

The explosions as Belgrano sank knocked over men standing in her life rafts.

Before they were rescued, 23 men perished of cold in the South Atlantic; three hundred more went down with the ship.

The rest of Conqueror's war patrol was relatively uneventful. She may, or may not, have been attacked by a torpedo dropped from an Argentine patrol aircraft. There were numerous other scares. There were reactor problems. And there was praise from the top.

"Your success on Belgrano completely changed the Args' plans and enforced a very protective attitude which has aided our operations enormously," Flag Officer Submarines signalled.

When the first mail arrived aboard in mid-June, Conqueror's crew were astonished to learn the headlines they had made around the world. The Silent Service was not so silent after all...

And yet in the aftermath of war, after the media hype and hysteria, what is surprising is that Conqueror and Belgrano veterans were often treated identically in their respective homelands.

Argentinian survivors were invariably shunned by the countrymen, while the reaction of many Brits to the submariners was also often hostile; half the people Cdr David Hall, Conqueror's senior engineer, met while fundraising for the RNLI later wanted to punch him.

Not surprisingly, some Conqueror men feel bitter at being branded murderers and warmongers.

"We were only there because of what those politicians had done, or rather failed to do," complained rating Bill Budding. "And then they turn round and blame us for doing our job."

INDEPENDENT PUBLISHER
SEEKS NEW NAVAL AND MILITARY BOOKS FOR PUBLICATION
For further details please write to:
Melrose Books (ref: NN)
St. Thomas Place
Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB7 4GG, UK
MELROSE BOOKS
ESTABLISHED 1969
Phone: 01353 646608 Fax: 01353 646602
Email: info@melrosebooks.co.uk
Web: www.melrosebooks.co.uk

NAVAL AND MARITIME BOOKS BOUGHT AND SOLD
LARGE STOCKS - MONTHLY CATALOGUES
SHOP OPEN 10-4
SEND FOR FREE CATALOGUE
Frank Smith Maritime Books,
92 Heaton Road,
Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE6 5HL.
Telephone: 0191 265 6333

BECOME A PUBLISHED AUTHOR
Independent publisher currently seeking authors in all categories
For more information contact:
Blenheim Press
35 Market Place (NN),
St Albans, Herts, AL3 5DL
Tel: 01727 852016 Fax: 01727 843716
E-mail: blenheimpress@tiscali.co.uk

OPERATION PURSENET (CYPRUS 1955-60)? Military historian researching whole campaign seeks accounts from ships companies taking part. At least HMS Charity, Comet, Daring. Reggio, Leverton. Stephen Jones 12 Green Lane, Chislehurst, Kent BR7 6AG milresearch@dsl.pipex.com

HP BOOKFINDERS: Established professional service locating out of print titles on all subjects. No obligation or SAE required. Contact: Mosslaird, Brig O' Turk, Callander, FK17 8HT Telephone/Fax: (01877) 376377 martin@hp-bookfinders.co.uk


Harrier Carriers
Vol 1
HMS INVINCIBLE
By Neil McCart
The well illustrated story of the first of the Royal Navy's new generation of aircraft carriers from the Falklands War to the early years of the 21st Century.
Hardback Price £19.95+ p&p. ISBN 1 901225 08 9
Also Still Available in Hardback:
FEARLESS & INTREPID 1965~2002 £24.00 + P&P
COLOSSUS-CLASS AIRCRAFT CARRIERS 1944-1972 £24.00 + P&P
HMS HERMES 1923 & 1959 £24.00 + P&P
THREE ARK ROYALS 1938~1999 £23.00 + P&P
TIGER, LION & BLAKE 1942~1986 £21.50 + P&P
HMS VANGUARD 1944~1960 BRITAIN'S LAST BATTLESHIP £19.95 + P&P
ILLUSTRIOUS & IMPLACABLE AIRCRAFT CARRIERS £23.00 + P&P
HMS GLORY 1944-1961 £19.95 + P&P
Please add £2.75 p&p for the UK & EU or £4.50 for worldwide surface mail. Payment by sterling cheque, postal order, or by VISA/MASTERCARD/SWITCH. Telephone/Fax/Email orders welcomed.
From FAN PUBLICATIONS, 17 Wymans Lane, Cheltenham, Glos GL51 9QA.
Tel/Fax:01242 580290 / Website: www.fanpublications.co.uk or order from good bookshops.

to advertise contact: advertising @navynews.co.uk

SPORT

Six of the best from rowers

REAR Admiral Andrew Mathews (Director General Nuclear) couldn't resist the opportunity to leap into a boat at the **Joint Services Regatta** in Peterborough.

Arriving to lend his support at the event (as patron of RN rowing) he seized the offer of a race, *writes Lt Louise Wooller of RN Rowing*.

He was one of over 30 oarsmen and women representing the Royal Navy against the Army and Royal Air Force.

Crews were competing in a variety of boats, including a women's eight (the first in several years), and they achieved six wins throughout the day, clearly demonstrating that RN rowing is a force to be reckoned with. (The Navy came second, sandwiched between the Army in first place and the RAF taking home the wooden spoon.)

The squad was well represented with some members coming back from sea, others heading out from shore establishments and a particularly strong and committed group from Britannia Royal Naval College.

In addition, Olympic hopeful Lt Peter Reed arrived to lend his support to other RN rowers.

The race day followed the club's AGM and barbecue when many members arrived to bid farewell to chairman Cdr Dave Hosking as he raced at the event for the last time before leaving the RN later in the year.

An accomplished oarsman, Cdr Hosking has represented the RN on numerous occasions with great success and has always been a stalwart of the organising committee for training and racing. His expertise and support have been integral to RN rowing for many years.

The regatta came at the climax of a successful year for RN rowing. There are plans for BRNC to enter a crew into Henley Royal Regatta and a small number of the men's squad are also hoping to enter as part of a Combined Services Crew (Lts Ben Kadinopoulos and James Fickling).

In addition, the women's squad won the Services Pennant at the Pairs Head earlier this year (Lts Ally Pollard and Danelle McKenna).

These successes are achieved with ongoing support from the Sports Lottery and this year two new boats have joined the RN rowing fleet – 'Horatio' and 'San Carlos' – which are much-needed additions to enable crews to train and race across the country.

Ladies are all on board

The RN and RM **boardriders** held an all-female beginners' weekend at Gwithian on the North Cornwall coast.

With instructers and beginners divided into groups, training began with warm-up exercises on the beach followed by some basic surfing instruction.

Then it was time to take to the waves to put the lessons learned into practice.

Great fun was had by all in the early sessions; the slight waves provided adequate conditions for the rookie surfers.

After a hard day's surf beginners and instructors retired to the nearby campsites for a hot shower and refreshments in the form of a barbecue.

Day two focussed on practising the lessons of the previous day and it was encouraging to see the majority of beginners surfing with some confidence.

In all this was a fantastic weekend which is becoming more popular with each event.

The next beginners' weekend will be held on September 8 and 9, again at Gwithian. Details from club secretary PO(ACMN) 'Bungy' Williams at 771 NAS RNAS Culdrose Helston Cornwall TR12 7RH, mil ext 2522 or visit the website www.royalnavyroyalmarinesboardriders.co.uk



● *A grin from Lt Matt Twiselton as he enjoys sea kayaking off the Anglesey coast*

Expeditionary oar fare

TEN sea kayakers are hoping to qualify as certified instructors and leaders this autumn so they can introduce the rest of the RN to the adventurous sport.

No kayak expedition in the open seas can take place without a qualified leader – something the RN doesn't have at present.

For an attempt to paddle around James Ross Island in Antarctica earlier this year, HMS Endurance's kayakers called on civilian expert Mike Devlin.

But to spread the word to the wider RN world, the association needs in-house experts.

So members of the RN Kayak Association have been in the water regularly this spring and summer to prepare themselves for examination in October (when it will be Mr Devlin passing judgment on the kayakers' ability).

The first surf training and championship weekend was staged for 18 paddlers at Sennen Cove in Cornwall.

The surf on the first day was up to three feet, providing excellent waves for coaching the more inexperienced paddlers in the RNKA's four new high-performance surf kayaks, recently bought with help from the RN Sports Lottery.

Skills taught included surf safety, how to catch waves, turning at speed, reacting to the conditions and surf etiquette (the rules of the 'road').

The intention was to run the RN championships on the second day, but overnight the conditions flattened so the contest will now take place next month at the Inter-Services.

On a more adventurous note, several RN paddlers took their kayaks into the Irish Sea for a trip along the coastline of Anglesey.

Apparently the last time we featured a major expedition by the association to Ecuador in 2004 it was "cut down to a crappy little column not worth wiping your arse with..." (*Mea Culpa – Assistant Ed.*)

Anyway... the Anglesey trip was, in the words of Lt Mark Jameson (a Lynx pilot currently on loan to the Royal Danish Navy), "in the right place (top left hand corner of the island), at the right time (springs), with the right people (debatable) with the right kayaks."

He continues: "For some of us this was new and others had been here before.

"Myself, I was here nearly 34 years previously and many times since but unusually never in a sea kayak. I'd sailed, swam, flown and climbed, but never paddled and as I soon discovered I had been missing a real treat."

The tide around Anglesey runs like a huge river ebbing and flowing through the gaps in the islands before bursting out back into the sea.

"A bunch of kids we were, daring ourselves to fit through gaps playing backwards and forwards on the swell," said Mark.

The local seal population was also out in force as the kayakers paddled their way along, as were the ferries to Ireland leaving Holyhead (black plumes of smoke gave away their setting sail).

For more details about RN kayaking and a training/preparation day at HMS Temeraire on September 28, contact Lt Cdr Joe Wood at HMS Temeraire on mil 9380 25623 or Temeraire SO2PP Wood J, Lt Cdr



● *Lacrosse purposes... Students from the University of Exeter close in on POET(WE(SM)) Teal during the RN's 13-8 defeat by the Devon side at RNAS Yeovilton (hence the brevity of this 'report'!). For more details on lacrosse, contact Lt Dan Weil at 845 NAS on 93510 6667 or RN Lacrosse on Navy Star.*

Picture: LA(Phot) Ian McClure, RNAS Yeovilton

Rookies enjoy Cornwall gig

TWO teams of rookie sailors hauled traditional Cornish gigs through the water as they competed for a century-old rowing trophy.

New entry sailors in Pellow Division at HMS Raleigh set out from Jupiter Point to race the 1½ miles to Saltash Quay during the Saltash Regatta, fighting for the Prince of Wales Trophy.

"Four weeks ago my division believed a gig was a concert," said Lt Shaun Southwood, Pellew Divisional Training Officer. "Now they're a committed, disciplined crew and they reached a highly-competitive standard."

Pellow Starboard claimed the trophy, reaching the quay two boat lengths ahead of their port rivals to lift the cup.

The future George V presented the cup at Saltash Regatta back in 1909 as a prize for a race between officers.

Over the years the competitors have changed; for much of the trophy's life the RN Engineering College at Manadon and fliers from RAF Mount Batten fought over it, racing in whalers.

With the closure of both establishments, the cup transferred to Raleigh.

Police steal late victory

A STRONG **RNRL** team was taken by coach Wayne Okell to the York International 9s.

The squad started well against York RU, in a tight and controlled performance, followed by a demonstration of powerful, expansive rugby league against the Beach Boys (a specialist 7s & 9s side).

The final pool game saw us come up against the 2006 champions, GB Police – a very big, experienced and mobile team this would prove to be the game of the pool stage and it certainly didn't disappoint.

With the police 12-6 up and seconds ticking away, super-sub Johnny Platt found space down the middle to score a length of the field effort out wide which was converted from the touchline to draw level before the final whistle.

The semi meant Team Fiji (1st Btn Scots Guards) and undoubtedly the game of the competition so far. The soldiers had swept all before them, scoring all their tries out wide but they were no match for the free-scoring Navy team, with Seli Bonamasi leading the way against his fellow countrymen in a 16-4 victory for the RN.

That set up a rematch with the police where a missed knock on- by the official proved to be crucial as it allowed the bobbies back in to the game. The police worked their way out of their own half and scored a fine solo effort on the fifth tackle in the corner at the death to sink the Navy.

Red-hot Winters and cool Lucy

ROYAL Marine John Winters lifted the first national crown of his super-heavyweight career, battling not just his opponent but flu in a night of amateur **boxing** to remember at HMS Nelson.

The green beret entered the ring against Lewsey's Steve Parsons barely recovered from illness.

Yet he proved faster on his feet and sharper with his fists than his much larger foe from Dunstable.

Winters comfortably avoided the slower shots from his opponent, although the Royal tired visibly in the third round – but by then he had an unassailable points lead.

When the bell rang he was proclaimed victor, 13-4.

The finals of the ladies national ABA contest were staged not at Nelson but at Hendon Police College with 70 bouts squeezed into a single day's boxing.

Four sailors were representing the Service in the ring: WEA Sophy Roseman (Collingwood), Lt Lucy Abel (Sultan), LWEA Claire Teeling (Collingwood) and AET Sam Thomson (RFA Fort Victoria/RNAS Culdrose).

Roseman had her work cut out in the Class C U80kg category against seasoned pugilist Sarah Alderman from the Met Police – recently selected for the England squad.

Although less nimble than her opponent, Alderman's experience in the ring told and her heavy blows against Roseman forced the referee to stop the fight.

Lt Abel drew the experienced Christine Shergold (Pilgrims ABC) in the semi-final. Superior fitness ensured a points victory for the officer, who faced England rival Leah Flintham (Stevenage ABC) in the final.

Lt Abel opened the decider with a flurry of quick single shots and combinations which prevented Flintham from settling.

Despite breaking her hand early in the second round, the officer claimed a comfortable 7-2 points victory.

The two remaining Senior Service fighters also walked away with gold – although courtesy of walkovers.

But all four impressed England coaches, who have invited the quartet to a training camp in Sheffield this month with England's top female fighters.

"All of the girls have trained extremely hard for this championship and thoroughly deserve their medals," said coach LPT Stuart O'Connor.

"I could not have hoped for a better result in the first season. To be invited to an England training camp is just the icing on the cake."

If you're interested in bolstering LPT O'Connor's potent squad, contact him on 93832 4048 or 07859 905024.

A decade of domination

Continued from back page

diving board after taking a year out for the birth of her son.

She returned to the podium immediately with two splendid silvers in the 3m springboard and 5m highboard.

Sadly her new diving partner pulled out late on so the Navy from having had high hopes of glory had to be content with second place.

The swimming began with a maximum 11 points from Caroline Smart and Mhairi Muir in first and second in the 400m, Caroline cracking the 5 minutes barrier.

Other successes included a win for Gemma Howells in the 4x1 individual relay and a one-two double again from Smart and Muir in the 200m.

Victory in the swimming freestyle relay – with a new RN record – took the team to within one point of the RAF on the final leaderboard, with the Army a further seven points ahead to claim their tenth successive triumph.

The swimmers deserve praise for their dedication and training – they did the business in the pond when it mattered.

They know, however – and everyone else in swimming knows – that the architect of this and all the other famous victories was the man who coaxed and cajoled even frightened them into the water over the past year and the past decade and he's getting better at it every year, namely coach Gary Thomas.

Peak effort by cyclists

SAILORS with the Cyprus Squadron headed into the hills to take part in the Mountain 2 Sea **cycle** race.

The event takes riders from the top of Mount Olympus (not the home of the Gods, but Cyprus' highest peak) round a rocky and demanding 55km (34-mile) course.

Two teams from the squadron (which comprises HM Ships Dasher and Pursuer) joined 57 other squads drawn from the three Services on the Mediterranean island plus civilian racers from around the world.

Battling against the punishing heat and difficult off-road trails, '2 Fishheads, a Crab and a Scablifter' posted the fastest time of the two squadron teams, finished in third place overall in 2h 56m, with rivals 'Operational not Decorational' some way down the field thanks in no small measure to numerous punctures and mishaps.

AB(CIS) Matt Boner collects the purple heart for falling off more times than any other sailor, while the 'battler' award was presented to Lt Cdr Alex Bush for completing the race with just three gears working after severely damaging his bike in a crash after just 14km.

Crisis? What crisis?

WIDESPREAD flooding in Gloucestershire saw the River Severn burst its banks and meant only one thing for five matelots based with Defence Joint Technical Training at RAF Innsworth... get the Open Canadian **canoes** out and paddle upstream from Bishops Norton.

The scene that greeted the team was one of utter devastation – whole fields were turned into lakes and debris was swept downstream at a rapid pace.

The river stopped for no-one except the band of brave brothers. Paddling three miles upstream, expedition leader, Lt Cdr David Gibson remarked: "I have not witnessed scenes of devastation like this since my stag night in Barnsley 30 years ago.

"My team was fatigued towards the end and quite traumatised by what they saw, but with my experience I managed to motivate them to dig deep and keep going."

No other team members were available for comment but a spokesman did say that the trip had been worthwhile and their efforts had been vindicated by the discovery of a Mitre football and a petrol can...

Chatham vs Chatham

THE footballers of frigate HMS Chatham found themselves up against each other at an international tournament in the Netherlands.

The ship visited Vlissingen to celebrate the 400th birthday of Admiral de Ruyter, Holland's leading naval hero.

Away from the pomp and ceremony, there was the serious business of a football tournament to win.

Chatham fielded two strong sides which both made the semi-finals of the contest after dispatching Dutch, Russian and Portuguese teams.

And in the semis the two Chathams met, with the A side seeing off the B team 3-0.

The A team then faced a squad from Portugal in the final – and saw them off too with a 3-0 victory to take the tournament.

Royals invincible



THE Royal Marines held on to their Inter-Command **hockey** title after trouncing the opposition at Burnaby Road.

Just four teams competed in the championships; Scotland were unable to field a side, but sent sent two players south, OM Lawrence turning out for Plymouth, then Portsmouth, while Lt Crockett played for Portsmouth throughout the tournament. OM Lawrence received a bottle of wine for his trouble in making an 800-mile round trip to represent other commands; he scored a goal for one of his teams and epitomised the commitment and spirit on which the RNHA places so much value.

The Royals held on to their crown with a 2-1 victory over Pompey, a 6-0 demolition of Plymouth and a 7-0 thrashing of Naval Air Command.

It was worthy of note that command teams with a command president, chairman, and secretary-esque structure in place achieved success, those without did not, *writes Alan Walker, RNHA*.

A special meeting of the AGM committed the RNHA to working with all commands to produce a viable structure for future occasions. It is clear that the PT branch at Command level needs Hockey to help itself.

Turning out for Portsmouth was Diver Daniel Martell, who had already represented the RN at the county championships and against the Indian Air Force. He was voted player of the tournament, was about to switch branches to become a NA(AH), but sadly PVRed last month. We shall miss him; he still had 2 years in the U23s and now he's back home in Wisbech.

The key hockey event in coming weeks is a new Inter-Branch contest, lined up over the weekend of September 8 and 9, hopefully with chefs and stewards competing against deeps, warfare specialists, dentists, ETs etc.

The first day of the tournament will be a light-hearted seven-a-side mixed-gender event, followed on Sunday by the more serious 11-a-side contest, which will close with a barbecue and disco/party.

The hope is that 200 players from across the RN-RM will converge on Portsmouth for the weekend from a stock of 1,000 or so hockey players (present and lapsed!) in the Senior Service.

Details from Lt Cdr Walker on rnso1@a.dii.mod.uk or 9380 24131.

● *Capt Richard Moore RM on the attack for the Commandos during their destruction of the opposition*

Picture: LA(Phot) Pete Smith, FRPU Whale Island



● *Contrary to what you may have seen in the national press, there were other players on the field in the Rundle Cup, the annual* **polo** *clash between the RN and Army at Tidworth, as well as Prince William – not least Lt Cdrs Nicholas Cooke-Priest and Allan Wilson, Cdr Arnold Lustman and Cdre Richard Mason. They were watched by a 5,000-strong crowd as they grappled with the Army, taking the lead before eventually going down to a 4-2½ defeat.*

Picture: LA(Phot) Emz Tucker, FRPU Whale Island

Five-star Scott

IN STARK contrast to last year's championships at sun-baked Hayling Island, this year's RN golf contest took place amid the flood waters of Yorkshire.

The famous club at Fulford was the venue and despite the elements, a thoroughly successful championships was enjoyed by some 55 of the Navy's top players, *writes Cdr Gary Skinns, RNGA secretary*.

Arrival for the first two rounds of the matchplay event was greeted by torrential rain, a practice putting green under water and the 18th green virtually surrounded by a moat.

Golfers are nothing if not optimistic, but with the course closed and the rain showing no signs of abating, the day was abandoned at lunch time.

This forced a reorganisation of the programme and after some deliberations a revised format was arrived at to achieve results in both matchplay and strokeplay events.

The improvised matchplay format proved popular enough for it now to be considered as the norm for the future.

After the Monday deluge, York appeared to escape the worst of the rain and play was uninterrupted thereafter. It's worthy of note that the greenkeeping staff performed miracles in getting the course ready for play on the Tuesday, and the presentation of the course all week was simply superb.

Winner of the previous four Navy titles, LNN Scott Gilbert (MDHU Portsmouth, *pictured*) started as favourite and he set his stall right from the first round by shooting a one-under-par 71.

Although he couldn't match this for the remainder of the week, he gradually drew further away from the opposition and finally won by six shots from CPO(MEA) Lee McCathie (Neptune).

McCathie's performance was one of the steadiest all week and he received much-deserved praise in picking up the runner up trophy. Third place went to Band C/Sgt Freddie Lomas (RM Band Portsmouth).

All three players gain automatic selection to the Inter Service team.

The other final day winners were CPO Chris Wood (URNU Birmingham) who was the leading individual entry and Lomas who won the prize for the lowest final round (discounting winner and runner-up).



In the non-qualifiers' greensomes event, CPO(WEA) Steve King and partner LOM Neil Dickinson shot an impressive 73.

The Inter-Command team events again provided some exciting play and close finishes, particularly in the matchplay.

Scotland were the surprise leaders after round one of the Inter-Command strokeplay, but only two shots separated three teams at this stage.

With six out of eight scores counting over three rounds, large leads can soon appear and disappear. In round two, the Royal Marines team began to show their strength in depth and although threatened at one stage by Naval Air, they retained the title they won at Hayling last year. Naval Air were runners-up and Scotland third.

The reorganisation of the Inter Command matchplay meant that all players were involved over two 18-hole rounds

The secretary's seeding once again pitched Royal Marines and Naval Air in the final match and, true to form, the two entered the game exactly level.

Right to the last, it looked as if Naval Air had the edge. With two wins each, Royals captain Sgt Ned Kelly (RMR London) was three down with three to play against NA Jamie Lown (845 Sqn) in the final match on the course and victory for the airmen seemed certain.

However, Kelly's resilience had not been reckoned and Lown, having done little wrong himself suddenly found himself only one hole to the good on the final tee.

To say Kelly's playing of the 18th hole was impressive is an understatement. Covering the par five with a drive and wedge to the green, Lown had no answer and the match was halved making the whole thing level.

The decider was fantastic sport for spectators. Each captain selected one player from their team who then played sudden death. With both captains not surprisingly selecting their No.1 player, Lomas from the Royals held his nerve over LPT Mike Setterfield (Heron) and clinched the title on the first extra hole. Thus the Royal Marines took both Inter Command titles for the first time. Plymouth Command took third place prizes.

Fulford was a first for the Navy Championships and both players and officials were all made to feel most welcome. Despite it being deep in RAF country, the members showed significant interest and were full of praise for the players enduring not the best of conditions.

Other matches for Navy golfers have not gone too well this season. On the men's side, they played for the first time in the Brent Knoll Bowl at Burnham and Berrow winning the consolation plate, while defeats have been encountered against Cornwall, Leeds and District, the Civil Service and most recently Dorset.

The ladies enjoyed a successful training camp in Portugal but their first match of the season against Cams Hall Golf Club was flooded out. In their most recent fixture, the ladies had an encouraging win over the Southwick Park ladies team.

There is still a shortage of lady golfers in the Service and anyone interested should contact the ladies secretary, Lt Debbie Vout on 9380 23958.

PTIs unite

THE RN **Physical Training Branch** Association held its biennial reunion at Portsmouth's Royal Maritime Club, with 83 club swingers past and present sharing sporting dits.

The clubz were entertained by some traditional hornpipe and club swinging by the budding PTIs of PT Qualifying Course 51.

PTIs looking to bolster the association's numbers should contact CPO(PT) Bailey at HMS Temeraire, Burnaby Road, Portsmouth PO1 2HB or temci@a.dii.mod.uk

To the women, a cup to the men, a spoon

THE Navy's female cricketers took the honours in their inaugural Inter-Services Twenty20 competition but their male colleagues collected the wooden spoon in a day of frantic batting and bowling at Burnaby Road in Portsmouth.

The men's tournament is into its third year, but for the female players this was a new experience at representative level, and the first time the RN had hosted the contest.

While the men locked horns on the main ground, their female counterparts toiled alongside them on the Burnaby Road (West) wicket.

The grounds looked in immaculate condition, well prepared and decked in Service ensigns, flags and sponsors banners. Thales sponsored the men's event and Qinetiq the ladies, both companies providing generous sponsorship to Combined Services cricket, so vital for its future development, *writes Lt Cdr David Cooke, RNCC spokesman*.

The highlight of the day for the Senior Service was the success of its ladies team who defeated both Army and RAF teams comfortably.

Both matches were team performances by the RN side who were most ably led by PO(MA) Emma Boswell (Keogh Barracks) who scored over 75 runs and took vital wickets in both matches, rightly earning her the title of 'player of the tournament'.

For the men's event a large number of corporate guests and sponsors mustered to watch what promised to be a fascinating tournament.

About 250 spectators filled a large marquee and members of the public and a number of local schools could be seen in the stands on the eastern side of the ground.

The opening match between the Army and RAF produced no real surprises and, batting first, the RAF only managed to muster 121 runs for the loss of seven wickets against some sharp and accurate Army bowling.

In reply, the Army looked to have a very strong batting line up, particularly with Gnr Heyns and Pte De Souza at the crease who stroked and smote the ball to all areas of the ground, including inside the marquee!

The Army easily overtook their target for the loss of four wickets with four overs to spare.

In the second match, the RN – defending champions – scored a respectable, but not totally match-winning 147-5 in their 20 overs and had at one stage reduced the RAF to 117-9 with only three overs to go.

It was therefore with total disbelief that with only one over to go and 18 runs required, the only recognised RAF batsman left, Ollie Bailey, attacked each ball and hit 6, 6, 0, 4, 4 to record a win for the RAF by one wicket with one ball to spare. An incredible result.

The final match between the RN and Army saw the Navy score an improved 169-5 in 20 overs with Mne Alvin Pollard (3 Cdo Bde RM) smashing the ball repeatedly towards the marquee in the latter stages of the innings.

The Army gave a predictable reply sending in some powerful hitters early on, and again it was Heyns and De Souza, ably assisted by Cpl D Webb (Army captain), who paved the way for a comfortable army victory with overs to spare.

Overall the day was considered to be an outstanding success enjoyed by payers and spectators alike.

On a final note, one further interesting point is that of the six matches played throughout the day, only one was won by the team batting first.

RESULTS

Ladies: RN vs Army: RN 158-5 (20 overs), Army 148-5 (20 overs) – RN won by ten runs; **Army vs RAF:** RAF 145-3 (20 overs), Army 146-2 (19.3 overs) – Army won by eight wickets; **RN vs RAF:** RAF 85-6 (20 overs), RN 87-2 (10.3 overs) – RN won by eight wickets.

Men: Army vs RAF: RAF 121-7 (20 overs), Army 124-4 (16 overs) – Army won by six wickets; **RN vs RAF:** RN 147-5 (20 overs), RAF 150-9 (19.5 overs) – RAF won by one wicket; **RN vs Army:** RN 169-5 (20 overs), Army 172-3 (15 overs) – Army won by seven wickets to become Inter Service Men's Twenty20 Champions 2007.

Next month



A date with Daring – at sea with the new destroyer



... and a date with Tyne – on fishery patrol in the Irish Sea



'Humanity after victory' – Colin White on the RN's compassion



'Let us die like brothers' – honouring the men of the SS Mendi

Plus

Culdrose's Diamond Jubilee Air Day

08
9 770028 167092

SPORT



A decade of domination

TEN years of near-total domination of Inter-Services swimming continued for the RN's men team, but their female counterparts faced a 45th year of heartache.

Both squads headed to the spiritual home of the RAF at Cranwell for two days of action in and out of the water (as well as swimming, there was diving); the men had clinched the title in eight out of the past nine years prior to the 2007 contest, but the women's team had not tasted victory since 1962.

Beginning with the men, in the 800m freestyle, Rick Andrews polished off all the opposition winning in 9m 10s; he never really looked troubled, *writes Alan Walker RNRMSA*.

Chris Collins and the RAF's Cpl Wooldridge were neck and neck for the whole event with Wooldridge taking third in 9m 40s and Chris a few hundredths of a second behind with a personal-best time.

There was a first for Joel Roberts in the 100m butterfly, with Nic Vaughan posting fourth. In a thrilling 200m backstroke Stu Mantle and the RAF's Cpl Poulton were inseparable – reaching the finish in a dead-heat.

Dan McSweeney won the 100m breaststroke with a record time with Surg Lt Simon Hornby from Sheffield Hospital coming fourth in 1m 11s to add to the RN team's growing tally.

The contribution made by Mne Chris Bumby, who has persisted with his training despite radiotherapy and chemotherapy treatment for cancer, the most recent of which was just four weeks ago was inspiring.

Chris cut a majestic figure in the 400m freestyle with what looked like a newly-shaved head, challenging the RAF's Buchan and the Navy's Andrews. Andrews strolled it in 4m 26s, the RAF took second and third place, with the Royal taking fourth – and three more points for the RN overall score.

There were other notable contributions too. Former Chief PTI Jim Storey, still coaching, swimming and diving, is waiting for heart surgery and kidney stone treatment – he was there as ever as was our dear Sam Wakefield – 67 years young; his back is killing him but he's still there coaching supported as always by his wife Jayne.

Navy Swimming is fortunate to have such people who care passionately about the sport and the people within it – a great big RN swimming family. LWtr Andy Grundy hasn't been very well of late but always is on hand to help out where he can – a true unsung hero.

The Army's Cpl Ferguson was always going to be trouble in the Men's 4x2 individual medley – and so it proved. He ran Ali Witt into a creditable second place and Mark Franklyn in his final Inter-Services event received two points for fifth place.

In the 100m Blue Riband freestyle Joe Tellett destroyed all the opposition with a very fast 51.6s, Navy skipper Nic Vaughan was a very creditable third behind the RAF's Gaz Daniell.

Our man from Brazil, Joel Roberts clocked his second win in the 100m backstroke with AET Richard Martin in third.

Ali Witt and Stu Mantle (*pictured below by LA(Phot) Pete Smith, FRPU Whale Island*) took the expected 11 points for a one-two finish and Joe Tellett and Matt Dawson received eight points from the 50m freestyle.

Heading into the relays the Army were on 53 points, the RAF 81½ and the RN on 98½.

Surprisingly the RN were pipped into second place in the medley relay 0.34 seconds behind the RAF.

In the 6x50 freestyle relay however, the Navy took eight points, while the RAF were disqualified for undue movement at the start of the race.

In the end that disqualification was academic as the Senior Service had an unassailable lead, clinching the title with 112½ pts, 23 ahead of the Air Force.

But for several missing stars in the ladies' events, the Navy would probably have won that Inter-Service title too.

PO(WEA) Becky Kerchey returned to the

Continued on page 46



Brands power

TWO sailors who prefer two wheels to four hit the legendary tarmac of Brands Hatch for rounds eight and nine of the **NG Road Racing** championships.

CPO Gary Morris (currently on a WO2 course at Collingwood) represented the RN Automobile Club in the 400cc Streetstock and Formula 400 events, while newcomer L/Cpl Tom Carver (Sniper Troop 40 Cdo) took to his Honda CBR600FX in the George White 600cc race, *writes PO 'Dutchy' Holland (Phoenix NBCD School)*.

After starting on the grid in a lowly 24th place, Gary (*pictured by PO Holland on his Kawasaki ZXR 400 with its distinctive Royal Navy livery*) fought his way through the field to finish 11th in his class.

Unfortunately, his bike then suffered engine problems which ruled it out of the final and the second day of racing.

He was, however, able to compete in the Formula 400.

Weather conditions swung between rain and sunshine, making tyre selection and suspension settings a lottery, and after starting 16th in the qualifying race he was pushed back to 22nd in the main race on a very wet 1.2-mile Indy circuit.

He managed two places better in the Formula 400cc race, posting his fastest time of the weekend.

Meanwhile, his green beret comrade found his first visit to the Kent circuit hairy to say the least, having raced on the first day using the wrong tyres.

Mistake corrected for the second day of racing, Tom gave the more seasoned R6 Cup riders a run for their money.

Although he finished some way down the field, the commando is using his rookie year to qualify for his clubman licence – and to ditch the luminescent vest he has to wear to signal his inexperience.

Published by Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth, and printed by St Ives (Andover) plc.